

Minutes
SFUFA FALL GENERAL MEETING
Wednesday November 6, 2013
2:30 - 4:00 pm

Burnaby: Irmacs Theatre

Via videoconference - Surrey: Room 3695 - Vancouver: HC 2250

130 members were present (including members via videoconferencing at Surrey and Burnaby campus) and quorum was achieved.

1. Approval of the agenda
MOVED by M. Taboada/R. Day **Carried.**

2. Approval of the minutes of the 2013 Summer General Meeting.
MOVED with one minor spelling correction under Presidents report.

C. Pavsek/M. Taboada **Carried.**

3. Business Arising.
None.

4. SFUFA budget update
D. Broun Treasurer, presented the 2013/2014 budget and noted the following:
 - Membership dues income is forecasted at \$769,000 this year based on figures provided by Academic Relations.
 - Salaries for SFUFA office staff are decreased by \$20,000 due to re-organization of staff positions.
 - There is a small surplus of \$30,584.24 this year, which will be transferred to the legal reserve to make it \$150,000.
 - The Legal expense budget has been increased to \$60,000 to reflect the actual amount spent last year (\$64,065).
 - The member events line item was increased from \$3000 to \$15,000 to cover all the member outreach and engagement events planned for the coming year.
 - Note: There is an error under equipment expenses – It was increased by \$3000, not 30,000.

5. **Presidents Report - N. Abramson**
 - As President, Neil's focus for 2013/2014 will be member engagement, gender pay equity, First Nations member outreach and Unionization.
 - SFUFA needs to strengthen their organization culture to be taken more seriously and is committed to finding out what members are concerned and passionate about, what the key issues are so that we can represent

members appropriately. An economics benefits survey conducted by SFUFA recently indicated that salaries and benefits was the most important issue for members. SFU's salaries used to be in the top quartile but have fallen to the bottom quartile. According to the survey, other issues that are important to members are achieving interest arbitration, governance issues, workload and job security.

- Neil approached the Administration about securing interest arbitration for SFUFA to replace the current "final offer arbitration" but in October the Administration turned it down. Neil has appealed and the Administration is re-considering the offer.
- At the last spring general meeting, members passed a resolution asking SFUFA to engage in a process to consider unionization and therefore SFUFA is obligated by its Constitution to implement this resolution. The SFUFA Executive is not taking a position on this issue and is allowing the membership to make the decision. Certification would require 45% of members to sign and that would roughly be 500 members. Many events were held to engage with members about this issue and also other issues of importance. To date, 2 coffee klatches, a pub night at each campus and two lunches have taken place. Most members have indicated that they are willing to support unionization with the assurance that there would be no strikes. It is estimated that roughly 214 members have been reached so far via member outreach events; about 31% are undecided, 16% are opposed and 61.5% are in favour. In May 2013, SFUFA sponsored a panel debate on unionization and it was noted that the videotape is available on the SFUFA website for viewing. Another discussion - legalities and experience of unionization - was held in September with speakers from UBC, University of Windsor, UVIC and SFUFA legal counsel Allan Black in attendance and the videotape of the session is available on the website for viewing. SFUFA members who are opposed to unionization are encouraged to organize an event for the membership and Neil noted that SFUFA would provide support in terms of booking a space and providing catering.
- Neil has approached the Administration about the gender pay equity issue, since it was outlined in President Petter's strategic goal for the University and SFUFA is pleased that the Administration appears to be committed to re-visiting the issue. A committee has been formed with 4 nominees from each side (SFUFA & SFU) and a meeting has been scheduled on December 3rd.
- SFU and SFUFA are working together to create good working conditions and to respond to the needs of faculty members who self-identify as aboriginal, indigenous or First Nations. A luncheon was held yesterday for the group, which was attended by J. Driver, VP Academic and N. Abramson. Neil noted that SFUFA appreciates the efforts the Administration is taking to address this issue.

6. **Update on Living Wage Campaign – J. Christians**

- At the last AGM in March, members requested that an update be provided at the fall general meeting. The campaign was launched in February 2013 and calls on SFU to become the first Living Wage University in Canada. The group was calling upon SFU to pass a Policy that would ensure that everyone working in SFU (direct staff and major outside contractors) would get paid enough to live on. In metro Vancouver this has been calculated to be \$19.62 per hour. The lowest wage paid on campus is \$11.00 per hour for “Best” cleaning staff. It was noted that if the Policy were passed it would have meant that all employers including all third party contracts such as Tim Horton’s and Starbucks would have had to agree to pay their staff a living wage. The research conducted by the group indicates that 73% earned less than a living wage. SFUFA raised this issue at a consult meeting with senior administration, which noted they would be taking the data to the Board of Governors for approval. In May 2013, the BOG voted against adopting the Living Wage Policy and President Petter met with campaign representatives to explain the outcome.

7. **Economics Benefits Committee report – C. Schwarz**

- UBC was recently awarded 2.5%/2.5% increase in salaries and benefits and SFU faculty received 2%/2%, UVic and UNBC have not yet reached an arbitration decision. SFUFA’s current agreement ends June 30, 2014 and the committee is gearing up for the next round of negotiations.
- As part of preparation for the next round of negotiations, SFUFA prepared a bargaining survey, which was circulated to members last month. The survey is now closed but please contact Brian Green if you would like to complete the survey. Carl will circulate the survey results to members shortly.
- The bargaining advisory committee is looking for volunteers; please let Brian Green know if you are interested in joining. The role of the committee is to advise the SFUFA Executive and the Bargaining Team when setting bargaining priorities and to provide advice during the actual negotiations. SFUFA anticipates about 1 meeting per month (2 hours) until bargaining commences and then more frequent meetings during negotiations.

8. **Pension Plan, divestment from fossil fuel industry**

The following motion was put forward asking SFUFA to urge pension trustees to develop an optional fund divested from the fossil fuel industry for those who want it.

Motion:

That SFUFA urges the Trustees of the Academic Pension Plan to initiate an investment manager search in order to offer a new, optional version of the Balanced Fund that is divested from the fossil fuel industry. This new fund should meet all of the requirements necessary to be offered on Sunlife's platform as an additional investment option (including daily valuation), and should mirror the asset allocation of the balanced fund (currently 35% bonds and 65% equities).

MOVED: L. Quarmby/G. Otero **Carried.**
(123 in favour; 7 opposed; 0 abstentions)

9. **Unionization**

At the October 10, 2013 meeting, the SFUFA Executive passed the following resolution to be voted on by the membership today:

Motion:

That over the next 12 months SFUFA would educate and inform its members about unionization and pursue certification under the Labour Code.

MOVED: N. Abramson/R. Day **Carried.**
(100 in favour; 29 opposed; 1 abstention)

After much discussion, two amendments to the above motion were put forward by the membership but were defeated:

(i) That the above motion brought forward by the SFUFA Executive be divided into two parts, a) Phase I: to educate members and then b) Phase II: pursue certification.

The motion was defeated. (17 in favour; 113 opposed; 0 abstentions)

ii) That over the next 12 months SFUFA inform its membership of the advantages and disadvantages of unionization.

The motion was defeated. (22 in favour; 85 opposed; 23 abstentions).

10. **Other Business** - none to report.

11. Adjournment.

Adjourned at 4:27 pm

MOVED by R. Day/J. Christians **Carried.**