

**Minutes**      *(draft)*  
**2022 SFUFA FALL GENERAL MEETING**  
Tuesday, November 23, 2022  
2:30 - 4 pm: via zoom videoconference

42 members were present and quorum was achieved.

1. Approval of agenda: Approved with one addition to “other business” – Sunlife Pensions.  
**Moved:** Ronda Arab/Bertille Antoine **Carried.**
2. Minutes of the 2021 Fall GM: Approved as circulated. **Carried.**  
**Moved:** Nina Saklikar/Dave Hannah
3. Business arising - there was none arising from the last minutes.
4. **Presidents Report – Kumari Beck**
  - SFU is updating its Bullying and Harassment policy and is bringing the Human Rights Office (HRO) under the umbrella of the Vice President, People, Equity & Inclusion (VPPEI). SFUFA is very concerned that the HRO office will no longer be arms-length from SFU and has been working with other labour groups on campus to bring forward concerns with the Bullying and Harassment process. It has been reported that the University Secretary and General Counsel have left the university and there are currently no plans to fill the positions.
  - The Dean of FASS was not renewed for a second term but has been appointed as a Special Advisor to the VPA & Provost.
  - The Executive Director of Faculty Relations resigned in July and SFUFA is frustrated at the pace at which advocacy issues are being resolved.
  - In 2020 the provincial government announced it would create BC’s second medical school at SFU Surrey campus. \$1.5 million was provided to SFU to build a business case and although SFU promised a robust consultation with the SFU community, that does not appear to be the case. SFUFA is encouraging faculty to meet with their faculty senators and to make their views heard.
  - SFUFA’s Member bulletins which have been circulated since April 2021 have been well received and is a good strategy for member engagement. Faculty members who would like to serve on SFUFA committees such as the Bargaining Advisory Committee, or the newly formed Departmental Liaison Committee and Chairs and Directors committee, are being asked to get in touch Brian Green.
  - A search committee is being set up for the renewal of the AVP Learning and Teaching and faculty members are being asked to get engaged in the process and provide feedback.
  - SFU has been conducting reviews of many of its policies, which is ok, but SFUFA questions the rapidity with which some of these are being brought forward, with procedural oversights and a focus on getting them through, rather than paying attention to faculty needs. This raises questions about the long-term impact on collegial governance at SFU.
  - SFUFA attends monthly meetings of the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of BC (CUFA), which represents roughly 5500 faculty members, and promotes faculty members’ interests to the provincial government. SFUFA also attends two other meetings per year at the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) in Ottawa, which is the national voice for academic staff, representing 72,000 teachers and academic professionals across the country.

- Thanks to the SFUFA staff for their ongoing support and hard work during the past year.

5. **Approval of the 2022-2023 budget**

- A surplus of \$100.00 has been budgeted; since this is a bargaining year, the budgets for the bargaining committee, member events and meetings have been increased. Salaries and benefits are increased to allow for an additional staff person in the SFUFA office. Legal expenses have been set at \$200,000. Bank charges, donations, staff development, telephone and alarm expenses stay the same. Dues income reflects the member dues increase that was effective in September, 2022.
- SFUFA pays into a CAUT strike fund which is currently \$6.00 per SFUFA member monthly. This rate is set annually based on a formula using December membership numbers. This fund provides strike pay to members who are on strike or who are locked out. SFUFA is eligible to receive other benefits from CAUT such as strike support loans, mediation and arbitration benefits, and picketing support from other member unions during a strike.
- The legal reserve sits at \$257,600.00, the bargaining reserve at \$75,000.00 and \$818,696.00 in the general reserve.

**Motion**

That the 2022-2023 budget be approved as presented.

Moved: Brenda Davis/Janice Regan

**Carried with 4 abstentions.**

6. **Bargaining Committee update** - David Broun

- BCGEU and HEU have ratified their contract under the governments Shared Recovery Mandate. The wage portion for both unions were the same, at .25 cent-an-hour wage increase plus a 3.24 % retroactive to April 2022, a 5.5-6.75 hike in year two, and a 2-3% inflation-dependent wage hike in year 3.
- SFUFA & SFU bargaining has had a slow start - bargaining with the university is planned for next week and SFU has retained an external negotiator based in Ontario, for this round of bargaining.
- There was a discussion about the PSEC mandate and how it applies to public sector employers with unionized employees.
- Bargaining priorities are: Salaries and inflation, workload, benefits-mental health in particular, teaching faculty, governance and collegiality.
- SFUFA is a member focused and member led organization and members are encouraged to participate by doing the following: paying close attention to SFUFA bulletins, participating in outreach events and thinking critically about the changes happening at the university.

7. **Presentation by Alison Hearn, Chair of Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee of CAUT.**

- CAUT established a statement on Academic Freedom in 2018 and is one of the best in the world.
- Limits: Academic freedom isn't a green light to break the law or violate the collective agreement; it is a limited professional right guided by standards of professional competence; it is not the same as freedom of expression and does not offer protection from unpleasant colleagues.
- Academic Freedom and struggles for Equity, Inclusion, Diversity and Indigenization are vitally linked.

- Access to Academic Freedom is not evenly distributed across academic staff. The best way to defend it is to exercise it.
- Academic freedom includes the right to criticize the university and the right to participate in its governance.
- CAUT is an outspoken defender of academic freedom and works actively in the public interest to improve the quality and accessibility of post-secondary education in Canada.
- CAUT is working on an Academic Freedom “explainer”.
- Education: CAUT hosts an annual Harry Crowe education conference on academic freedom and law.

**8. Annabree Fairweather, Executive Director, CUFA BC.**

- CUFA represents roughly 5500 faculty in BC. and supports high quality post-secondary education and research, and advocates for members re: research, academic freedom, university governance and labour relations. The current President is Ken Christie. There are 5-member faculty associations including SFU, UNBC, UVIC, UBC and RRU.
- Current important issues for Post-Secondary Education: Post-secondary funding model review, university governance and micro-credentials, understanding Precarity in BC (SSHRC) project.
- Government consultations this past year: Skills for the jobs of tomorrow, sexual violence act and policies, pay equity legislation.
- Each year CUFA honours the outstanding scholarship and public policy contributions of academics at 5 research universities and the call for nominations for the CUFA BC Distinguished Academics Awards is now open. There are 3 awards in total.
- Thank you to all the elected officials of SFUFA and to SFUFA staff for all their hard work and advocacy behind the scenes.

**9. Other business.**

- The following was noted about the Sunlife/Pension Plan: It was noted that the Income Tax Act does not allow one to hold more than one pension for the same work over the same period of time. As a result, if you use any SunLife pension funds to purchase past service in the BCCPP, you are required to close your SunLife pension account. One does NOT need to transfer remaining funds to the BCCPP, but you DO need to transfer them to another retirement vehicle. This applies only to those members who used a PORTION of their SunLife pensions to buy BCCPP years of service and still have a residual balance in the SunLife pension account.

**10. Adjourned at 4:11 pm**

**Moved:**

Dave Hannah/Hilmar Pabel

**Carried.**