

## Minutes of the SFUFA Executive Meeting

Held Thursday October 12, 2023

Via zoom

9.30 – noon

### In attendance:

Ronda Arab (English)  
Lyn Bartram (SIAT)  
Kumari Beck (Education) Chair  
Adena Brons (Library)  
David Broun (Physics)  
Tim Beischlag (Health Sciences)  
Mike Sjoerdsma (Engineering Science)  
Ljiljana Trajkovic (Engineering Science)  
Rochelle Tucker (Health Sciences)  
Brian Green (Executive Director)  
Melanie Lam (Executive Assistant, Minutes)  
Jennifer Scott (Member Services)

### Regrets:

Janice Regan (Computing Science)  
Bertille Antoine (Economics)

The meeting is via zoom today due to the TSSU strike and was called to order at 9.36 am.

### 1. **Approval of Agenda**

Approved with two additions i) TSSU Strike ii) Response from SFU re: CEE.

**Moved:** Ronda Arab/Mike Sjoerdsma

**Carried.**

### 2. **Approval of the September 14, Minutes.**

Approved with one edit to the attendees list.

**Moved:** Tim Beischlag/Mike Sjoerdsma

**Carried.**

### 3. **Business arising**

a) At the September Consult meeting, SFUFA raised concerns related to faculty services and supports provided by CEE, which are no longer available. A response was received from SFU which was reviewed with the executive committee. It covered the following topics: Supports for EAL learners, Canvas support, slow ticketing system, embedded model vs centralized model, lack of expertise in science education; lack of physical contact when help is needed.

Consequently, CEE has been authorized to do some research on response times and client satisfaction levels. It was noted in the written response that a decision hasn't been made on the return to the embedded model, most universities in Canada are using the centralized system. The model for EAL has gone through changes and SFU would like to further discuss this with SFUFA and SFUFA is very encouraged by this response.

b) TSSU strike:

- The Raptors NBA Team has donated \$10,000 to the TSSU strike fund.
- As the strike continues, many questions are being asked about the assignment of student grades, and SFUFA feels it is the responsibility of SFU to take initiative and address this proactively with

the community.

- A group of roughly 40 faculty members have appealed to SFUFA to donate funds to the TSSU strike fund. After much discussion the executive voted on the following motion:

**Motion:**

That SFUFA donates \$4000 to the Teaching and Support Staff Union (TSSU) in support of their ongoing strike.

**Moved:** Ljiljana Trajkovic/Lyn Bartram

**Carried unanimously.**

Following the above discussion, the budget was reviewed and it was determined that there is leeway in the budget to donate a bit more to the TSSU strike fund. The following revised motion was voted on via email.

**Motion:**

That SFUFA donates \$7500 to the Teaching and Support Staff Union (TSSU) strike fund.

**Moved:** Kumari Beck/Mike Sjoerdsma

**Carried unanimously.**

**4. Presidents Report – Kumari Beck**

- Mike and Kumari attended the CUFA Fall council meeting and it was noted that good reports were presented by other member associations. It was reported that many universities are spending more on legal fees, mostly due to the increase in the number of grievances and arbitrations.
- SFU Presidential Reappointment Community Consultation: SFUFA has sent a letter to the Presidential Renewal Committee.
- 3 member socials were held this Fall, one at each of SFU's campus locations and they were well attended.

**5. Executive Director report**

- Brian gave an update on a recent grievance settlement regarding Collective Agreement provisions that limit the over-use of limited term positions. SFUFA & FR are going through a list of people who are affected by this decision and are trying to determine how best to manage those positions.
- The issue of employees from Research Services, Student Learning Commons & CEE wanting to join SFUFA - Brian gave an update on this case.
- SFU Med School (SFUMS): The search for a founding dean continues and is expected to be wrapped up by February 2024; an acting associate dean, Dr. Evan Adams has been appointed, and it was noted that Dr. Adams has not been given a faculty position @ SFU, but holds an adjunct Professorship from FHS.
- Research Assistants: The TSSU is attempting to bring them into their bargaining unit and the case is with the LRB.
- If the TSSU strike is not resolved before Thursday October 19th, SFUFA will consider skipping its regular consult meeting with senior admin.
- It has come to light that SFU has hired the services of Lions Gate Risk Management (LRGM) to surveil and

investigate those on the TSSU picket lines, and this appears to be a big issue for the SFU community. This firm has been linked to operating against Indigenous Land Defenders, surveilling the Trans Mountain Expansion Project which undermines Indigenous rights, and therefore SFU is being seen as violating the terms of Reconciliation. It is recommended that this be brought forward for discussion at the consult meeting with senior admin.

**6. Member Services report-** Postponed to next month.

**7. Staffing Proposal**

- In 2022 SFUFA members voted to increase member dues to address mounting legal fees and the need to increase capacity in the SFUFA office.
- Cases have increased over the last few years, but that's not the primary strain on staff. What's needed is someone to do legal prep work in advance, develop case files etc. data collection and analysis, support with ongoing Teaching Faculty issues and faculty accommodations.
- The proposal being brought forward is for a part time contract position to work with the MSO and the ED on background work for member cases, with the possibility of it turning into a longer-term position in the future.
- This person, while on contract, would not be attending executive meetings and will have no contact with SFUFA members or work with senior administrators on SFUFA's behalf.
- There was full discussion of this proposal at the executive planning retreat in September. The option of creating a 25% position has been built into the 23/24 budget and the office does have a person in mind. SFUFA has sought legal assistance in drafting a conflict-of-interest policy for the candidate.

**Motion:**

That Brian Green be authorized to move forward with the offer of employment to Derek Sihota, regarding the part time contract position at the SFUFA office, based on the employment conditions discussed by the executive committee today and on September 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Moved:** Kumari Beck/Tim Beishclag

**Carried.**

**8. Committee Reports.**

- David Broun gave an update on bargaining and noted that although bargaining has stalled, discussions between SFUFA's Executive Director and SFU's external negotiator have taken place and a proposal and counter proposal have been exchanged.

**9. Items for Consultation – October 19<sup>th</sup> @ 10.30 (Cancelled if TSSU pickets are in place)**

- i. SFU's hiring of LGRM to surveil TSSU picket lines. We know the University has heard from across the community about this issue, and indicated that it has canceled the contract. However, SFUFA has very serious concerns and expect to raise a number of questions regarding the decision.
- ii. Financial statements - SFU's financial statements have not yet been released, though in past years they have been released prior to October 1st. SFUFA would like to hear why they are delayed, and when they might be expected.
- iii. Grades and assessment - as the University has been unable to reach an agreement with the TSSU, many faculty and students are asking what the plans are for assignment of grades. SFUFA

believes the University has a responsibility to address this proactively with the community, and would like to hear what is planned.

- iv. Medical School - SFUFA would like an update on the medical school, and specifically to hear when Senate will be considering the matter, as recent media stories seem to suggest the plan is confirmed, but we are not aware that Senate has approved the SFUMS.

**10. Other business**

- A reminder that the executive will meet with senior admin in Strand Hall on the 19<sup>th</sup> if TSSU pickets are down.

**11. Adjournment:** There was no other business and the meeting was adjourned at 12.09 pm.