
MAUT

Council Meeting

MINUTES

Tuesday, October 14, 2014.
McGill Faculty Club 12:00 noon

Present:	
Executive:	<i>B. Lennox, K. Hastings, D. Lowther, A. van den Berg, A. Saroyan, A. Shrier</i>
Council:	<i>T. Mawhinney, D. Covo, N. Kamran, E. Shor, T. Moore, K. GowriSankaran, J. Cooperstock, R. Sieber</i>
Regrets:	<i>C. Ragan, H. Durham, A. Kirk, M. Nahon, K. Siddiqi</i>
Guest:	<i>N. Acheson</i>
MAUT Staff:	<i>H. Kerwin-Borrelli, J. Varga</i>

B. Lennox called the meeting to order at 12:13 pm.

1. Adoption of Agenda and Approval of Minutes

Council reviewed the agenda. Under New Business, A. Saroyan proposed adding an Ad Hoc Committee to Review the Draft Revisions to Regulations on Sabbatic Leaves and Leaves of Absence. Council agreed. K. Hastings moved to adopt the amended Agenda. Seconded by E. Shor. There were no objections and the Agenda was adopted.

The Minutes for the September 25/14 Council meeting will be reviewed at the next Council meeting.

2. Business arising from the Minutes

B. Lennox updated Council on discussions concerning MAUT's Academic Statement of Freedom and referred to Council's motion of November 2011. The Statement was presented for an initial consultation at the October 01/14 meeting with the Principal and Provost and was well received. The Principal had comments on some of the paragraphs, but there were no obvious objections. Prior conversations with S. Strople and L. White had suggested a process to bring the Statement to Senate and ultimately have it included in the Regulations. The Principal and Provost suggested that MAUT's Statement be part of a three-document presentation at Senate, including a redefinition of McGill's Mission Statement and an updated Statement on Integrity.

B. Lennox emphasized that if there are delays with a three-statement package, then MAUT's Statement will be presented on its own.

B. Lennox thanked the Membership Committee for two successful events: the Welcome Gathering on September 9th and MAUT's Octoberfest Apple Picking on October 5th. He commented on members' positive feedback. B. Lennox will formally congratulate the Membership Committee and the staff at McGill's Faculty Clubs.

B. Lennox commented on the testimonials from Past-Presidents K. GowriSankaran and M. Baines on the passing of Past-President H. Patrick Glenn. He suggested that MAUT ask Dean D. Jutras for permission to post the Law Faculty's link to the article on Prof. Glenn on the MAUT website. Council agreed.

3. New Business

a) Ad Hoc Committee to Review the Draft Revisions to (1) Sabbatic Leaves and (2) Leaves of Absence Regulations

Council was asked to approve an ad hoc Committee to Review the Draft Revisions to the Regulations on Sabbatic Leaves and Leaves of Absence. The members are: A. Saroyan, D. Lowther and T. Moore. A. Saroyan moved and A. Shrier seconded:

- *That Council establish an ad hoc Committee to be given the task to review the draft revisions to the Regulations on Sabbatic Leaves and Leaves of Absence;*
 - *That the ad hoc Committee forward its comments to Council by October 17th.*
- Council agreed unanimously.

A. Saroyan moved and K. Hastings seconded:

- *That Council respond to Committee members' comments by email;*
- *That, based on Council's and members' input, the Committee will submit the proposed changes to the revisions to Associate Provost L. White by October 23rd.* Council agreed unanimously.

B. Lennox referred to deadlines and noted the requested response and deadline times may be too limited to ensure proper consultation. He proposed that Council consider two types of meetings: (a) those with formal agendas and (b) those dealing with Business Arising issues.

b) SBAC update

A. Shrier commented that information regarding the 2015 premiums for Health and Dental Insurance, publicized on October 6th, did not allow sufficient time for adequate discussion. Council members have forwarded questions concerning historical trends and reasons for increases. Additional information including (a) a summary in response to Council's questions and (b) a chart explaining essential features and the rationale for the increases in employees' contributions was circulated. A. Shrier noted McGill's insurance plans are self-funded and that some funds must be kept in reserve. M. Boisvert of *Towers Watson* is McGill's contact. A. Shrier explained that increases resulted from extraordinary out-of-country emergency claims that were beyond what had been anticipated.

N. Acheson commented that if Council needs more information concerning numbers and extracts, these should be circulated prior to making decisions. He suggested that MAUT, in conjunction with other employee groups, could request a quasi-formal presentation by *Towers Watson* concerning increases and decreases to all employee groups.

B. Lennox noted that Council must have the necessary information prior to any presentation. N. Acheson commented that the SBAC representatives only received the information recently and noted the response deadline and questions concerning transparency issues. A. Saroyan pointed out that many documents, circulated for consultation and comment, are sent out with little lead time for careful review. A. Saroyan moved:

That the MAUT President send a letter to the Senior Administration, including the Principal, Provost and VP Finance, and point out that the Association cannot participate fully in a consultation or approval process if documents and information are not received within a reasonable time.

T. Moore proposed a friendly amendment:

That MAUT, in addition to sending a letter to the Senior Administration, extend an invitation to members of the Administration to meet with MAUT Council;
That the Association values collegiality in issues concerning consultation.

N. Acheson reiterated that SBAC members should report to Council and that Council must have the information from the SBAC with enough lead time for adequate consultation and discussion. A. van den Berg commented on the more fundamental issue of being presented with decisions that were already made. The point of consultation is that information must be available prior to decision-making. He referred to the SBAC and CASC parity committees.

N. Acheson cautioned that post-retirement benefits are being chipped away when considering the total compensation package. He emphasized that the two parity committees must communicate.

Alenoush Saroyan moved and A. van den Berg seconded the motion:

That a letter be sent to the Principal and Provost stating MAUT's comments about lead time on consultation documents;

That information concerning decision-making must be received a week before the deadline;
That VP Finance M. DiGrappa be invited to address Council concerning on-going financial issues.

Council agreed unanimously.

c) CASC update

B. Lennox updated Council on the meeting on September 24th. The meeting information was received with little lead time. The Provost reiterated that the next two years of the three-year salary policy would remain intact. Concerning McGill's ranking in the U-15 following implementation of the three-year salary policy, the University would be in the grouping of 6th to 10th place. CASC members have requested back-up information.

The Provost described the changes in Québec City with the new Liberal government. For the past two years, McGill has been preparing for (a) the next two years of voluntary retirement and (b) budget cuts. The Provost's noted that 180 full time staff at Concordia has taken voluntary retirement. Though further cuts are anticipated, the McGill is in good shape. There was a discussion of the split between merit and across-the-board increases. A. Kieran was asked to prepare several scenarios. E. Shor suggested that MAUT look at the dollar mass and that the ATB be divided evenly. Council commented on McGill position in the U-15 at the end of the three-year salary policy. Currently McGill is in 11th or 12th place.

Alenoush Saroyan asked if the rankings considered total compensation. B. Lennox noted this information is expected before the next CASC meeting. A. Kieran will provide an overview of a project to examine pension, health and supplements from U-13 universities. No information is currently available for UCalgary and UBC. B. Lennox noted that McGill is on the middle place concerning benefits and that its pensioners are doing better than many others. McGill is best in sabbatical relief. A more detailed list is expected.

On October 8th, the Principal's Report following the Board of Governors meeting [October 2nd] was circulated. MAUT members reacted with questions concerning apparent discrepancies between the Report and the Budget presented by the Provost. On October 10th, the MAUT caucus of the CASC met with AVP L Gervais and J. D'Agata [Director, Pension Administration] at 8:00 am. The information from this meeting was that the University had not diverted members' 2.2% contribution to offset the pension deficit to the University's operating fund and that members' perceptions resulted from miscommunication.

On October 10th, B. Lennox wrote to the Principal expressing MAUT's concerns over information distributed about the University finances: (a) that the performance of pension plan assets were being applied to the University's operating budget and (b) if the University was making its agreed-upon contributions to the deficit sharing plan. B. Lennox requested that a clarification be issued and that MAUT would follow up with a set of Q&A's to members. [Note: On October 16th, the McGill community was invited by the Principal, Provost and VP Finance to attend an Open Forum concerning McGill's financial situation on October 27th.] More details will follow.

B. Lennox commented the actuarial liabilities have been revised because of the required application of new mortality tables: people are living longer. The \$15.7M surplus in the Vice-Principal's Financial Report is derived from a \$3.2M cash surplus in 2014 and a \$12.5M decrease in the actuarial liabilities because of fund improvement. This actuarial liability change cannot be applied to the operating budget.

B. Lennox commented on new Con't Ed programs in the Middle East and that the Québec government retroactively changed the funding formula, which now happens to be in McGill's favor. The contribution to the pension deficit is capped at 2.2%. R. Sieber commented that CASC representatives do not have access to raw data and they should have financial expertise to enable them to examine these numbers. B. Lennox commented CASC members only work with final data. J. Cooperstock noted the need for accounting oversight to ensure that knowledgeable people make decisions. K. Hastings said that recently MAUT had a legal opinion on McGill's pension plan. He commented that Council could explore the cost of such financial expertise.

Al Shrier suggested that MAUT have a representative on the Board's Finance Committee. B. Lennox will contact members in the Desautels Faculty of Management and ask for names of candidates for this proposed position. He noted this suggestion will be an agenda item on the next meeting with the Principal and Provost.

(d) 2014-15 MAUT Standing Committee memberships

Alenoush Saroyan referred to a slide with the current membership in MAUT's Standing and ad-hoc Committees. Several corrections were noted and these will be updated on the MAUT website. It was noted there is no stated mandate for the Committee on Collegiality.

Alenoush Saroyan and K. Hastings will canvas Council for new members to these committees. A. Saroyan proposed (a) that the ToRs of these Committees be posted on the website and (b) a reminder be sent to the chairs of the various committees to provide an updated activity report. A. Saroyan inquired whether Council has approved designated terms of office. B. Lennox proposed that a motion be brought to Council to set term lengths. T. Mawhinney suggested that a request for candidates be sent via the ListServ. K. Hastings suggested that Council members be canvassed first and that self-nominations would be accepted. A. Saroyan proposed that the ToRs and the call for contribution of names be on agenda for the next Council.

(e) Consultation/approval for MAUT interactions

The October 13th draft of the *MAUT Policy on ad hoc Consultation within the University* was circulated. It included a preamble, principles and a procedure. This draft policy will be reviewed at the next Council meeting.

D. Covo commented on the current, broad consultation in the Libraries which included input from Librarians, faculty and students.

(f) Executive Reports (VP Communications)

Al Shrier referred to two requests: (a) R. Thomson, coordinator for the *Chantier3 Universal Design for learning collaborative project* who asked to interview academics about UDL and (b) N. Hall, Faculty of Education, Educational & Counselling Psychology, who requested to interview new faculty members concerning their perceptions of their academic environment. He noted an E-Newsletter format had been developed in collaboration with J. Day, who previously worked on the updated MAUT website. He has asked Executive and Council members for articles for this E-Newsletter. A. Shrier reported that over the summer months, the Communications Committee [A. Shrier, A. Miller-Nesbitt, G. Gore and T. Hebert] had investigated several communication formats, including an opt-in / opt-out feature. It is possible that an electronic version will replace the paper version of the MAUT Newsletter. More details will follow.

(g) Committee Reports (Membership)

The Membership Committee reported on two successful events: (a) the Welcome Gathering on September 9th with 157 guests and (b) the Octoberfest Apple Picking on October 5th with 231 guests. Because of its popularity with members and their families, there were two sittings at the Octoberfest event. At its October 10th meeting, the Membership Committee planned to continue these activities for existing members and hope to attract new members. At this point, there has been no charge for participants. The Committee is (a) developing a survey asking for input to be sent to member and non-member guests at these events; (b) planning future activities; (c) focusing on recruiting new members; and (d) planning to have MAUT faculty and departmental representatives. B. Lennox noted that 30 new members will cover the costs of these events and the Faculty Club appreciates the encouragement.

4. Other Business

Associate Provost L. White has asked for MAUT's nominations on the Committee to review the Policy on Safe Disclosure. MAUT nominated J. Cooperstock (Electrical & Computer Engineering) and D. Covo (Engineering, School of Architecture).

B. Lennox referred to previously mentioned requests from R. Thomson and N. Hall who had requested their messages be sent to members via the ListServ. Council did not oppose these requests. J. Cooperstock suggested that such requests be advertized in a classified section of the E-Newsletter.

K. Hastings noted that A. van den Berg and J. Varga will attend the FQPPU *Conseil* on October 23-24. K. Hastings will attend some of the events.

B. Lennox proposed that the meeting adjourn. Council agreed. The meeting adjourned at 2:12 pm.