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# MAUT Council Meeting

## MINUTES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

McGill Faculty Club 12:00 noon

Present:	
Executive:	K. Hastings, B. Lennox, C. Ragan A. Saroyan, G. Mikkelson
Council:	H. Durham, A. Kirk, A. Paré, M. Nahon, K. Siddiqi, L. Kloda, A. Moores, R. Sieber
Regrets:	A. Shrier, P. Caines, K. Hashimoto, K. GowriSankaran, L. Glass
MAUT Staff:	H. Kerwin-Borrelli, J. Varga
Guests:	B. Haskel, B. Murphy

K. Hastings called the meeting to order at 12:12pm.

### 1. Adoption of Agenda

Council reviewed the previously circulated (March 20 and 24) proposed agenda. K Hastings noted that his report from the MAUT CASC Caucus, included in the previously circulated material, would not be submitted to Council at this meeting because of an inaccuracy that needed correction. The revised report would be submitted at the next Council meeting. No other agenda changes were proposed. C. Ragan moved to adopt the Agenda. Seconded by H. Durham. Adopted by consensus.

### 2. Approval of Minutes

No Minutes were reviewed.

### 3. Newsletter and other VP Communications responsibilities

Council acknowledged the resignation of B. Reed, VP Communications on March 10, 2014 (initially communicated to K. Hastings, who informed Council by email on March 11). K. Hastings pointed out that, as a new VP Communications is expected to take office upon announcement of the 2014 MAUT elections results at the Spring General Meeting on April 25, 2014, there is not enough time for an interim VP Communications to fill this position. This creates an urgent situation regarding the MAUT Newsletter. He emphasized that the Constitutional requirement for “regular” Newsletters implies at a minimum one Newsletter circulated during each Council’s term. It was therefore important that a Newsletter be circulated before the end of the current Council’s term on April 25, despite the lack of a VP Communications, who is normally the Newsletter’s editor.

C. Ragan moved *that Council appoint the Executive Committee as an Editorial Committee, with the President, K. Hastings as chair, to produce the MAUT Newsletter to be approved by Council and distributed before the Spring General Meeting on April 25, 2014.* Seconded by H. Durham.

Council voted 10 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 abstentions. The motion passed.

G. Mikkelson remarked that the production of the Newsletter is a bare minimum and that other communications have not happened. According to the Constitution, the Executive Committee is to report to the membership twice a year. The Executive Committee has not communicated as a body nor have the Committee chairs reported. He indicated he had opposed the motion on the grounds of efficiency and appropriateness. Concerning efficiency, he felt an editorial committee

would be cumbersome. Concerning appropriateness, he felt uncomfortable with the idea of submitting his own Newsletter article(s) to the Executive as a whole for editing because he felt that several Executive members had expressed views which could be considered censorship.

B. Lennox noted that, although the Executive had not reported to the membership as a body, the President had circulated several reports on monthly activities to the membership in the fall term. He also took exception to the use of the word “censorship”. He stated that the Newsletter is published by the Association, and that it is entirely appropriate for the Officers of the Association to have opinions about what should and should not appear in the Newsletter.

A. Paré commented on the need for trust between authors and the editor. K. Hastings indicated that, as Chair of the Editorial Committee, his inclination would be to accept all submitted articles as is.

#### **4. Member Discussion Forum: update**

At the March 10, 2014 Council, the Communications Committee was charged with proposing mechanisms for open communications. K. Hastings met with the members of the Communications Committee on March 25, 2014 and the Committee agreed to prepare proposals for the April 17, 2014 Council meeting. The Committee agreed to carry on its work without a designated chair (former chair B. Reed VP Communications having resigned on March 10) until a new VP Communications is announced at the Spring General Meeting on April 25, 2014.

#### **5. Statement on Academic Freedom**

K. Hastings had received from the Academic Freedom Committee on March 20, 2014 two alternative versions (#1 and #2) of the Statement of Academic Freedom prepared following previous discussion of the proposed Statement of Academic Freedom at the Fall General Meeting on November 15, 2013 and by Council on December 11, 2013. The main difference between the statements was that Version #2 included a mention of institutional autonomy and the statement that it cannot be used to infringe academic freedom. These two versions were circulated to Council on March 22, 2014. K. Hastings asked for general discussion of the two versions in order to develop a sense of whether Council was prepared to accept one or the other, or request specific further revisions.

C. Ragan raised the larger question of whether it would be appropriate for Council to reverse its previous decision to seek to adopt a Statement of Academic Freedom for ultimate incorporation into the university statutes/regulations. For purposes of discussion, he moved: *that MAUT does not adopt a statement on Academic Freedom*. Seconded by G. Mikkelson.

G. Mikkelson referred to a case at the University of Ottawa in which it appeared that the administration had been able to cite a statutory academic freedom statement in dismissing a faculty member. A. Paré commented the university has existed a long time without a statement and inquired whether the statement had been sent to CAUT for its opinion. K. Hastings noted that CAUT has issued its own statement and has encouraged member associations to develop their own for inclusion in the regulations of their universities.

B. Lennox thought it very appropriate that MAUT develop its own statement and take a leadership position instead of reacting to another McGill statement possibly prepared by the administration. He stressed that MAUT has to get the statement right. Several Council members commented that the committee, chaired by B. Gillon, had done extensive research.

A vote was taken on the motion: In favor, none, opposed, 12, abstentions, none. The motion failed.

Further discussion of the May 20 alternative revised Statements of Academic Freedom followed, including discussion of the term “monetary incentives or punitive measures” and of scenarios in which the freedom of academics to choose the material they teach and their topics of research academics could be constrained.

A. Kirk moved: *that Council adopt revision #2 as a Statement of Academic Freedom that will be brought to the membership for endorsement at the Spring General Meeting on April 25/2014.* Seconded by A. Saroyan.

A vote was taken: In favor, 8, opposed, 1, abstentions, 1. The motion passed. The Statement of Academic Freedom (revision #2) is appended to these Minutes (Appendix 1).

A. Paré and G. Mikkelson proposed seeking an opinion on the MAUT Statement from CAUT and S. Saroyan suggested more dialogue with the Committee on Academic Freedom. A. Kirk proposed that when MAUT presents the statement for endorsement by the membership, it should provide a context.

#### **6. 2014 MAUT election: status update**

K. Hastings noted that on March 13, A. Shrier, Past-President, resigned as Chair of the Nominating Committee to be nominated for the post of VP Communications. In a Council e-vote tallied and announced March 18, R. Janda was appointed chair of the Nominating Committee to replace A. Shrier (see Appendix 2 below). Because R. Janda could not attend the current Council meeting K. Hastings provided an update on the election. He noted that all Executive Officer positions had been filled by acclamation and that 10 duly completed Nominations had been received for the 5 vacant Council positions. An eleventh nomination form was sent to the MAUT email after the March 13, 2014 deadline. The Nominating Committee needed to prepare a reaction statement to the late submission and to advise the proposed candidate of his/her eligibility to run.

B. Lennox moved: *that Council appoint M. Nahon and H. Durham to decide in consultation with the remainder of the Nominating Committee the eligibility of the nomination in question, and inform the member, the nominator and the seconder.* Motion seconded by A. Saroyan. Adopted by consensus.

[Note: On the evening of March 25, 2014 M. Nahon and H. Durham, on behalf of the Nominating Committee, informed the candidate, nominator and seconder that the late nomination could not be accepted.]

## **7. Reports from Standing Committees**

Council received reports from the Membership Committee (by G.Mikkelson), from the Tenure and Mentoring Committee (by A. Saroyan) and from the MAUT caucuses of the Pre-Senate, and Pre-Board of Governors meetings (by K. Hastings). K. Hastings also submitted a note indicating that there would be no report during the term of the 2013/14 Council from the Collegiality Committee. These reports, which were circulated to Council March 23 and March 24, are attached as appendices to these minutes.

One item among these reports was the subject of discussion at the meeting, namely recommendations from the Membership Committee. In his report G. Mikkelson noted that at its February 14, 2014 meeting, the Membership Committee made several recommendations to be brought to Council. He expressed these recommendations in the form of a Council motion: *that:*

- 1. The one-year dues holiday should apply not only to people joining MAUT for the first time, but also to those who left MAUT at some point in the past and are re-joining the association.*
- 2. One must join MAUT to get the dues-free year and access to the list-serve.*
- 3. Non-members who have had access to the listserv for more than one year should be removed from the list, since their access to it creates confusion about who is and who is not an MAUT member.*

Seconded by A. Paré

A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously. K. Hastings said a message would be sent to inform non-members currently on the ListServ that they would no longer be receiving all member messages and inviting them to join MAUT.

## **8. Motion on the Composition of the Pension Administration Committee (PAC) : update**

K. Hastings referred to a discrepancy between the Minutes of the April 12, 2013 Council meeting (approved on October 23, 2013) and the memory that he and several other participants had of the motion regarding the composition of PAC. At the April 12 2013 meeting the motion initially presented contained two parts: Part 1 referring to changing the composition of PAC, and Part 2 referring to changing the basis for voting from dollars held in the plan to one person, one vote.

This initial two-part motion was not passed, but an amended motion based only on Part 1 was passed. The Minutes of the April 12, 2013 meeting suggested that, like the original two-part motion, the amended one-part motion called for the removal of two of the 9 current members of PAC appointed by the Chair of the Board of Governors and the Principal, and their replacement by two new members, one elected by the academic staff and one elected by the administrative and support staff. However K. Hastings, G. Mikkelson, and several other participants recalled that the amended one-part motion also introduced a change to the proposed composition change, namely that the two additional members would not replace existing members, but would be added to the committee increasing its total membership from 9 to 11.

K. Hastings noted that the 11-member PAC option would still make plan member elected representatives a majority (6 of 11 members) without cutting any appointees by the

Administration or the Board. The goal of a more democratic operation of PAC would be achieved and would be more likely accepted by the Board.

K. Hastings yielded the chair to B. Lennox and proposed the following motion that was seconded by A. Paré:

*That Council, following the April 12, 2013 Council decisions on the composition of PAC, approve the President writing to the Board of Governors requesting that PAC be increased by two additional members, one elected by the academic staff and one elected by the admin/support staff.*

There was a consensus among those present that this was a good solution, however because a quorum was not present at that point in the meeting due to departure of some Councilors, it was agreed to submit the motion to an e-vote poll of Council after the meeting.

[Note: The e-vote poll was held and the motion was passed: see Appendix 8 to these Minutes.]

#### **9. Plans for Spring General Meeting (SGM) April 25, 2014**

Council discussed plans for the SGM. Suggestions were to abbreviate the time required for Reports from Executive by circulating these with the SGM Agenda so that report authors could briefly respond to questions from members at the SGM. The Referendum on the Changes to the MAUT constitution would have to be set up and the results released at the SGM along with the 2014 Election Results. The following were suggested as possible “meatier” issues for general discussion 1) member communications and engagement, 2) Academic Freedom Statement, 3) MAUT Survey on Daycare.

A. Paré moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by L. Kloda. Approved by consensus. The meeting adjourned at 2:18 pm.