

**Minutes from a Meeting of the Concordia Council on Student Life  
Held on April 8, 2022  
Virtual Meeting on Zoom**

**PRESENT:** Andrew Woodall (Chair), Lauren Broad (Secretary), Gaya Arasaratnam, Paul Blouin, Annette Bowen, Thuy Trang Cao, Dianne Cmor, Margaret Colton, Lauren Farley, Christian Favreau (replacing Cassandra Lamontagne), Matthew Fishman, Julie Foisy, Katerina Ivanov, Jordan Jerome-Pitre, Rosalie Lafrance, Hemanth Lingraj, Laura Mitchell, Erin Mullins (replacing Temi Akin-Aina), Irene Petsopoulos, Masoumeh Zaare.

**ABSENT WITH REGRETS:** Elaine Cheasley Paterson, D’Arcy Ryan, Stephanie Sarik.

**ABSENT:** Gaelle Abou Issa, Marie-Josée Allard, Malcolm Asselin, Melanie Burnett, Darren Dumoulin, Christian Durand, Nigel Jonathan Ochieng.

**GUEST:** Mary Burns (Minutes).

**1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The Chair opened the meeting with Concordia’s territorial acknowledgement. They explained the procedures for conducting the meeting virtually.

Irene Petsopoulos put forth a motion to approve the agenda. Jordan Jerome-Pitre seconded the motion.

Masoumeh Zaare requested to amend the agenda to discuss item 6.1 prior to item 4.3.1 and the amendment was accepted. The motion to approve the amended agenda was put to a vote:

In favour: 9

Against: 1

Abstentions: 2

***The motion passed.***

**2. REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR**

The Chair welcomed the Council to the penultimate CCSL meeting of the 2021-2022 year. They remarked that some student elections had taken place and more would be happening soon. They also noted that classes were coming to an end and exams would start in the next few weeks. The Chair encouraged the Council to take a moment to reflect on the year, on what they would like to celebrate, what they were proud of and what they would wish to change.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**3.1 Approval of the Minutes from the Meeting of November 26, 2021**

Masoumeh Zaare put forth a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting of November 26, 2021 and Margaret Colton seconded the motion. The motion was put to a vote:

In favour: 11

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1

***The motion passed unanimously.***

### **3.2 Approval of the Minutes from the Meeting of January 21, 2022**

Masoumeh Zaare put forth a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting of January 21, 2022 and Jordan Jerome-Pitre seconded the motion. The motion was put to a vote:

In favour: 10  
Against: 0  
Abstentions: 2

*The motion passed.*

### **3.3 Approval of the Minutes from the Meeting of March 11, 2022**

Irene Petsopoulos put forth a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting of March 11, 2022 and Hemanth Lingraj seconded the motion. The motion was put to a vote:

In favour: 10  
Against: 0  
Abstentions: 2

*The motion passed.*

## **4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

### **4.1 Business Arising from the Minutes of November 26, 2021**

There was no business arising from the Minutes of November 26, 2021.

### **4.2 Business Arising from the Minutes of January 21, 2022**

There was no business arising from the Minutes of January 21, 2022.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

### **6.1 Discussion to provide financial compensation to the CCSL Outstanding Contribution Award recipients**

The Chair explained that Masoumeh Zaare wanted the Council to consider giving the recipients of the CCSL Outstanding Contribution Award a financial reward. Masoumeh Zaare had suggested an amount of \$5,000. The CCSL Awards sub-committee had been asked for their opinion on the idea prior to the meeting and they agreed that it was worthy of careful consideration at CCSL. The Chair asked the Council to consider whether a financial reward was in line with the spirit of the CCSL Award, which recognized students, staff and faculty who have gone above and beyond what was expected of them in their roles. Regarding the amount proposed, the Chair wanted the Council to consider where the funds would come from on an annual basis. The Chair further asked the Council to consider whether the financial reward would happen for the current year's recipients or only beginning the following year. In the interest of transparency, the Chair informed the Council that Masoumeh Zaare was a recipient of the CCSL award as a staff member for the current year. Hemanth Lingraj supported the proposal and stated that it would be a great opportunity to show appreciation to individuals who contribute to student life. They proposed that a smaller amount could be offered. Masoumeh Zaare stated that they felt \$5,000 was an appropriate amount and in line with awards given at other universities. Masoumeh Zaare suggested that the funds could be taken from the \$140,000 of surplus funds that had accumulated from the CCSL Special Projects Fund over the past several years. They gave the rationale that many students had been struggling financially during the pandemic and the financial reward would show appreciation to those who had done their best to help. Masoumeh Zaare stated that a financial reward would motivate people to improve student life at Concordia and would support recipients' transition to higher education or career development.

A lengthy discussion ensued. Some council members agreed with the idea, but felt that \$5,000 was too much. Rosalie Lafrance suggested that a financial reward could be specifically earmarked to pay for tuition rather than a cash gift. Jordan Jerome-Pitre suggested that a gift card could be a good reward. Julie Foisy asked whether the recommendation was for only the current year or for future years as well and they expressed concern about where the funds would come from in future years. They were concerned about taking funds from the previously discussed Big Hairy Ideas competition, which would provide significant funding towards large-scale, new student initiatives. The Chair confirmed that there were surplus funds currently remaining from previous years in the CCSL Special Projects Fund, but that surplus funds were not guaranteed from year to year. Dianne Cmor noted that the word “compensation” did not accurately reflect the spirit of the award and suggested using other language to describe any financial aspect of the award. Julie Foisy suggested that the unused funds may be better directed towards removing barriers for student participation in student governance. Rosalie Lafrance noted that it was important to keep in mind the mission of CCSL and wondered whether a financial reward fit the spirit of the award. They noted that the award was not a scholarship and that students go above and beyond because they care about student life, not to get a financial reward. Gaya Arasaratnam suggested that a non-financial reward, such as mentoring, may be a suitable alternative. They noted that it would be challenging to continue to find funds for such a reward year after year. Irene Petsopoulos agreed and also noted that such a significant change should not be implemented for the current year, but if approved, should only start the following year. Dianne Cmor suggested that CCSL could look into working with Advancement and Alumni to get a donor to support a financial reward. Most council members felt that a financial component should go only to students. Masoumeh Zaare stated that they felt it should go to all recipients, including staff and faculty.

The Chair thanked the Council for their input and noted that the nature of the award and what it should entail was a large philosophical question and that the reality was that there was currently no on-going funds available to cover it. Andrew Woodall stated that they would present a more formal and concrete discussion document at the next CCSL meeting.

#### **4.3 Business Arising from the Minutes of March 11, 2022**

##### **4.3.1 Motion to approve the CCSL Special Projects Fund Big Hairy Ideas Competition**

The Chair reminded the Council that a document with the guidelines and application process had been presented at the previous CCSL meeting and that a motion had been circulated prior to the meeting for the Council to review. Jordan Jerome-Pitre put forth the following motion, seconded by Julie Foisy:

#### **MOTION TO APPROVE THE USE OF CCSL SPECIAL PROJECTS UNUSED FUNDS FOR A BIG HAIRY IDEAS COMPETITION**

*Given that the Concordia Council on Student Life (CCSL) Special Projects Fund has accumulated unused funds totalling approximately \$140,000 over the past several years;*

*Given that the CCSL would like to see these funds used to support student life projects;*

*Given the success of the Big Hairy Ideas Competition launched in the 2015-2016 academic year;*

*Be it resolved that \$140,000 of the unused funds from the CCSL Special Projects Fund be earmarked for a Big Hairy Ideas Competition according to the Big Hairy Ideas Competition Guidelines (see attached).*

A discussion ensued. Masoumeh Zaare suggested that the Council allocate only a portion of these funds for the competition and to review the amount in the fall based on the number of applications received. The Chair replied that they cannot predict the number of applications, but based on the last competition, it was reasonable to assume there would be many requests. Furthermore, the deadline for applications was only set to be in November 2022. Lauren Broad confirmed that at the last competition in 2015-2016, the CCSL received 23 applications with a total requested amount over 1 million dollars. It had been challenging to select only three projects and all the available funds were distributed. After careful consideration, the motion was put to a vote:

In favour: 8  
Abstention: 3  
Against: 0

***The motion passed.***

## **5. REPORTS AND ITEMS OF INFORMATION**

There were no reports or items of information.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

The Chair informed the Council that Gaya Arasaratnam had accepted a position in BC and would be leaving Concordia in May. The Council would say goodbye and thank Gaya Arasaratnam at the next meeting. The Chair congratulated Margaret Colton on her new position as Manager for Services for New Students. The Chair congratulated the Women's Hockey Team for winning gold in the National competition. They wished all the students good luck on their upcoming exams.

### **Points of Interest:**

- April 13, 2022: Concordia Engagement Awards Celebration at the Loyola Chapel
- April 15, 2022: Deadline to apply for Non-Academic Medals and Awards
- April 21, 2022: Alumni and Dean of Students Office hosting a drop-in thank you event for student leaders
- June 2022: Convocation ceremonies in-person

## **7. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was scheduled for May 6, 2022 at 10:00 am on Zoom.

## **8. TERMINATION OF MEETING**

Hemanth Lingraj motioned to terminate the meeting. Jordan Jerome-Pitre seconded the motion. The motion was put to a vote:

In favour: 9  
Against: 0  
Abstentions: 2

***The motion passed.***