



UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA STUDENTS' UNION

Emergency Board of Directors Meeting Minutes 1st December 2017

Present:	Trophy Ewila	Meeting Chair & President
	Romil Jain	VP Finance & Operations
	Shahd Shaker	Director at Large
	Jessica Moffatt	Director at Large
	Alex Regular	Faculty Rep - Science
	Patience Okuku	VP Internal
	Djordje Kovacevic	Faculty Rep - Management
	Michael Gauld	Faculty Rep - Arts
	Dela Hini	Faculty Rep - Applied Science
	Caitlyn Mackie	Director at Large
	Maher Al-Hawarneh	Faculty Rep - Graduate
Absent:	Amal Alhuwayshil	VP External
	Layne Richardson	Faculty Rep - Health & Social Development
	Mohamed Azzam	VP Services
	Zainah Azam	Director at Large
	Kristen Morgan	Student Senate Representative
Guests:	Sarah Furgason	UBCSUO Staff Representative on Hiring Committee (Non-Voting)
	Michael Olson (Via Phone)	BCFS Representative on Hiring Committee (Non-Voting)

7.1 The Meeting was Called to Order @ 7.06 pm

7.2 Official Territory Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge that we are on the traditional, ancestral territory of the Okanagan Nation. We would like to recognize that learning happened in this place long before this institution was established. It's important that we understand that we are very privileged to be living, working, and learning in these territories that are not our own.

7.3 Speaker's Business

I have no intention of breaking any by-laws. However, due to the context of the matter, the demand from Board members to meet and time sensitivity of the topic in discussion, I leave this to you, the Board to decide. Conscious that By-Law VII (12): There shall be at least twenty-four (24) hours 'notice given for a non-regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors

7.3.1 BIRT: The Board over look Bylaw VII (12) to continue with this meeting.

Discussion of the motion ensued.

Moved By: Shaker

Seconded By: Jain

Vote: Yes - 8: No - 2 (Moffatt & Gauld)

Carried



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7.4 Approval of Agenda

7.4.1 **BIRT:** the agenda be approved as presented.

Moved By: Jain
Seconded By: Gauld
Vote: Unanimous

7.5 Approval of Minutes

7.5.1 As this is an emergency meeting the Minutes from the previous meeting will not be presented.

7.6 Presentations

None.

7.7 Monthly Written Activity Reports from Executive Committee

President	Not Required
VP Finance & Operations	Not Required
VP External	Not Required
VP Internal	Not Required
VP Services	Not Required
Interim General Manager	Not Required

7.8 Question Period

7.9 General Orders

7.9.1 Old Business

None.

7.9.2 New Business

None.



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7.10 Discussion & Announcements

UBCSUO General Manager Hiring Committee

There was a letter written by UBCSUO Staff regarding the GM Hiring Process. Furgason was invited to provide clarification on the letter and to represent UBCSUO Staff. ([See Letter from Staff](#)).

Ewila asked all present to read the letter and to ask any questions. The claims in the letter were reiterated and the bullet points from the letter summarized.

Ewila opened up discussion for members of the Hiring Committee to address the claims made in the letter.

With regard to paragraph 3 of the letter Okuku denied there was no communication with UBCSUO Staff prior to the letter, the hiring process was elaborate. Okuku made reference to the email he sent, a list of the top 10 candidates were selected among the voting members of the Hiring Committee and a consensus was made regarding the candidates who would move on to the next phase of the hiring process

Okuku expressed concern regarding UBCO's reputation and wanted the members of the Board of Directors to be mindful of this in their decision.

Referring to paragraph 5 of the letter, Okuku commented the first suggestion was to stop this process, was this not short-notice for interviewees to be contacted? What would happen if these interviewees were not selected once a new process was initiated? He felt they may sue UBCSUO.

Moffatt stated personal ability was not in question in the hiring process, the concerns are based on the structure and process. The need was to make sure the process was based on integrity and the best candidate for the position is chosen. The Committee was created with a view that the non-voting members would assist the voting-members in the hiring process, and voting-members were there to protect the UBCSUO's interest. When speaking with the non-voting members they felt their role was unclear; the non-voting members wanted to be a support; when asked why they did not bring their concerns to the Committee earlier, it was thought the voting-members were doing other things and they had the situation under control.



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Hini recorded her appreciation to both parties regarding the concerns raised. She reiterated the concerns in all emails regarding the lack of transparency by members of the Hiring Committee. The reputation of the students and the institution would be called into question no matter the outcome.

Credit should be given to the Hiring Committee and staff of UBCSUO who came forward to discuss issues that would impact members. Her individual research into Hiring Committee structures showed we are lacking in proper foundations. UBCSUO staff should be used for these steps, as their role is that of support.

Communication from the Hiring Committee to the rest of the stakeholders is of utmost importance.

Shaker and Regular both expressed they were uncomfortable in making a sound decision based on the lack of information provided by the Hiring Committee.

Okuku requested a Motion to move In Camera (this was over ruled by the members).

Shaker asked if there was access to the Hiring Committee Minutes? These were not forthcoming.

Okuku expressed his belief that a selection by the Hiring Committee of one of the candidates was the main reason behind the grievances the UBCSUO Staff had brought up, this was based on meetings Okuku had with UBCSUO Staff. Furgason, a non-voting Hiring Committee Member speaking on behalf of the UBCSUO staff stated the belief was the candidate did not have the qualifications for the role.

The meeting then turned to the discussion around the job description bullet point 1 of paragraph 3 of the letter. Ewila stated the job description was taken from the UBCSUO Bylaws. He believed there had been consistency in the manner candidates were selected; re-writing the hiring process structure would, in his opinion, result in a similar structure and would not change the outcome of the hired GM.

The meeting again shifted back to the subject of the choice of a particular candidate - Shaker asked why Furgason disagreed with Okuku's choice - Furgason reiterated her previous comment regarding their qualifications for the role.

Ewila, requested the Board focus on the issues presented and not on a particular candidate.



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Moffatt recognized the process should restart, as not everyone was comfortable with the process, but knew this was unrealistic, as a compromise she suggested that all members of the Hiring Committee become voting-members and another UBCSUO Staff member be appointed to the Committee. Okuku responded voting-members were trusted to vote in the interest of the Students' Union, he perceived the biggest issue was the non-voting members wanting voting rights - he highly recommended no-voting rights be given to UBCSUO Staff. Jain agreed with Okuku, sighting voting rights should not be given to staff members who will be working with the person that is hired.

Olson thanked Moffatt for her suggestion but felt this was not the best solution for this situation. He stated in his opinion all Hiring Committee members have the same interests in mind, and did not believe in the need for a vote in order to have his voice heard. He was mostly concerned that his role and that of his fellow Non-Voting Committee Members was unclear to them all. The Hiring Committee were only provided with a shortlist and asked for their opinion, which he did, but from the beginning there was a missing piece of what expectations the voting members of the Hiring Committee had from the Non-voting members.

The subject of transparency came into discussion - Regular asked if the process had been carried out with greater transparency and communication, would the outcome of the shortlist change? Ewila, expressed his understanding of transparency being "intentional withholding of information" and he believed he had contacted individuals as necessary therefore, did not believe this would have changed the shortlist.

Furgason, stated that 100% the process would have been different, and she felt strongly if there had been an initial meeting and the expertise of individuals with hiring knowledge sought, they would have been able to draw a stronger selection of candidates. She acknowledged everyone had done their best in the given circumstances. Olson agreed with Furgason and also confirmed there was an issue on his part with one particular candidate and as such he may have to leave the Hiring Committee due to a conflict of interest pertaining to his job with BCFS.

Shaker asked for confirmation that all of the Hiring Committee were present at the interviews. This was confirmed and Shaker requested the interviews move forward with a follow up meeting to make a decision. Shaker was not in favour of starting over. In her opinion, maybe the reasons for concern is the non-voting members feel the voting-members will choose an unqualified candidate. Ewila confirmed concerns around a candidate's qualifications were discussed with the non-voting members prior to this meeting.



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Moffatt felt if a candidate who the non-voting members were strongly against were able to make it through to the interview process this was evidence that the hiring process was flawed. Moffatt recommended the candidate in question be removed from the interview process.

Okuku confirmed the non-voting members were provided with a list of what the voting-members felt reflected the interests of the students and this was why they did not present a complete list of all candidates. He believed if there were genuine concerns with a particular candidate these should have been brought up sooner. Gauld expressed it was the overall process that created the issue not solely any one candidate.

Shaker requested if it would be possible to show non-voting members all candidates that made the top 10 to prove there were better candidates to choose from, and who can go through to the interview process.

Olson stated in his position as a representative of the BCFS, he would advise against interviewing a candidate who lacked experience and any conflict of interest they may represent. Olson advised he had been given specific instructions by his employer that he must remove himself from the Hiring Committee if this candidate goes through to the interview stage and the name of BCFS will also be removed from all aspects of the hiring process.

Furgason, as the Non-voting members of the Hiring Committee had been bound by confidentiality, she believed this candidate maybe problematic for the UBCSUO staff, however she could not adequately confirm this.

Moffatt directly asked Ewila do you believe this candidate to be qualified - Ewila confirmed his thought was yes. Jain questioned why qualifications were necessary, as in his role he was learning as he went along. Shaker expressed the General Manager role is not like a Board position it is important the individual selected has relevant experience and does not need to be trained from an elementary basis.

Hini was concerned about UBCSUO's future relationship with BCFS if this candidate were to be interviewed. Olson expressed this was part of his concern and he hoped a positive relationship could continue, but he reiterated if he is given an advisory role and there was a conflict of interest he must uphold the interests of BCFS. Gauld expressed he also agreed that relevant experience was important. Okuku stated it had been difficult to find candidates who possessed both business experience and Student Union experience. Okuku asked Olson if it was possible to define experience in his HR role - Olson confirmed it was.



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Al-Hawarneh questioned the direction of the meeting firstly, is the process flawed or not? Secondly, regardless of the answer, this candidate had the minimum requirements to reach the shortlist and has the right to be interviewed, and we do not have the right to eliminate them. Shaker agreed with Al-Hawarneh and asked if it was too late to bring an unbiased member to the Committee to provide their opinion, as it appeared things were becoming personal. Moffatt replied with regard to Al-Hawarneh statement that the process is in question and she believed it to be in the best interests of UBCSUO to strike this candidate therefore eliminating the concern.

Regular suggested the Board were unable to make a decision on this as they did not know the details of the candidates. If the candidate in question was simply being interviewed would Olson still leave. Olson confirmed he would.

Al-Hawarneh questioned why BCFS was exerting pressure on the Board to eliminate a candidate when their role was purely advisory? Olson confirmed the candidate in question would put the UBCSUO in a legally damaging position and he reiterated he would be removing himself from the process if this candidate moved forward because this is how critical the situation was. He recognized the challenge this presented as not everyone in the room had access to the candidate information.

Regular expressed her disappointment that the process had come this far and they were unable to have sufficient information to make an informed decision. Could information on the candidate in question be shared or the Hiring Committee go back and make a decision? Shaker again asked if it were possible to bring in an external person. Okuku believed everyone is mature enough to hear the candidate information if the meeting is taken In-Camera, or another option would be to proceed with the interviews and it would be possible the candidate in question would not be selected.

Hini suspected the Board would be unable to make a decision as they were unable to express themselves confidentially and this meeting had been a matter of discussion only. Maybe it would be best to call the meeting to a close and those who are on the Hiring Committee can remain to discuss the candidate in question candidly, after which they can reach out to the remaining non-voting members so a decision can be made.

Kovacevic asked if there was a deadline in place to hire the GM, Ewila confirmed there was not, but it would be beneficial to find one this semester.

7.11 Next Board Meeting Date

TBA

7.12 The Meeting Adjourned and the Hiring Committee remained.

Moved By: Jain

Seconded By: Mackie

Vote: Unanimous



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