



Athabasca University  
Students' Union

# Athabasca University Students' Union

## Council Meeting Minutes

**Approved March 10, 2016**

**Tuesday March 8, 2016**  
**4:00pm MST**

**Meeting Called By:** Shawna Wasylyshyn, President  
**Type of Meeting:** AUSU Interim Council Meeting  
**Minutes:** Donette Kingyens, Communications and Member Services Coordinator

### Participants

**Council:** President Shawna Wasylyshyn, Vice President External and Student Affairs Colleen Doucette, Vice President Finance and Administration Brandon Simmons, Councillor Megan Daigneault, Councillor Philip Kirkbride, Councillor Kim Newsome, Councillor Pierre Plamondon, Councillor Laura Zhu

**Staff:** Executive Director Sarah Cornett, Communications and Member Services Coordinator Donette Kingyens

**Absence:** Councillor Tamra Ross (less than two weeks notice of meeting)

Meeting called to order at 4:03pm MST.

### Agenda and Minutes

- 1.0 Approval of Agenda** All
- Motion:** BIRT Council approve the agenda as presented.  
*2016-03-08 Council Agenda.pdf*
- K. Newsome / P. Plamondon **Carried 8/0**

### Action and Discussion Items

**Bylaw Amendment – Member Consultation Review** S. Wasylyshyn

**Note:** File *2016-03-08 Council Backgrounder.pdf* is provided as background and should be referred to for this meeting.

The meeting was called to ensure that council fully understands all of the efforts and background that has gone into the bylaw revisions, and reviews the results of the member consultation process, prior to the first reading of the motion at the council meeting on Thursday, March 10, 2016.

- A point was raised about whether the current bylaws are, in fact, illegal, in reference to section 98 of the Post-secondary Learning Act which states that the members can bring forward petitions, which are similar to bylaws.
- It was also suggested that members should be able to bring forward referendums, which many other student unions allow, and that a referendum be a tool for the members to amend the bylaws.

Council discussed the following points:

- The Post-secondary Learning Act still states that petitions from the membership are to bring resolutions to council that must be voted on by the council.
- Council is the only one that can vote on a bylaw change as per the PSLA, but this does not stop members from putting for petitions or referendums making their wishes known to council.
- The bylaws already have a specific section on petitions. The members can put forth a petition, but it is a recommendation to council which the council itself would still need to vote on it. This is in line with the Post-secondary Learning Act.

- AUSU is putting in place multiple consultations with the membership to ensure that there is still accountability and transparency with the membership.
- Only one AUSU member-at-large out of 35,000 expressed any interest in the AUSU bylaw changes, despite multiple efforts and due diligence to get the word out to the membership and to provide options for them to give feedback.
- Making the changes to the bylaws is required to abide by the PSLA legislation, and AUSU has already received a legal opinion on this matter.
- The member that expressed concerns told AUSU that getting a second legal opinion would not alleviate their concerns.

Council agreed that they have enough information and input from members and council to move forward with the proposed changes to the bylaws as indicated in the original motion in order to bring them in line with the Post Secondary Learning Act.

It was also noted that a meeting of council to discuss results of the member consultations should be part of AUSU process and time member consultations are held, and in particular, before first reading in the bylaw revision process.

### Next Meeting and Adjournment

The next meetings of Council are set for:

Thursday March 10, 2016 at 4:30 pm MST – Regular Meeting

Thursday March 16, 2016 at 4:30 pm MDT – Special Meeting to Announce Election Results

Thursday March 31, 2016 at 4:30 pm MDT – Special Meeting for Executive Election (Tentative)

Thursday April 14, 2016 at 4:30 pm MDT – Changeover Meeting (Tentative)

Meeting adjourned at 4:40pm MST.