



Concordia Student Union - Council of Representatives  
CSU Special Council Meeting  
Thursday, March 11, 2021  
Via Zoom, 18h30

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

The chairperson calls the meeting to order at **18h33**.

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**We would like to begin by acknowledging that Concordia University is located on unceded Indigenous lands. The Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of the lands and waters on which we gather today. TiohEá:ke/Montreal is historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations. Today, it is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples. We respect the continued connections with the past, present, and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community.**

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## 2. ROLL CALL

Council Chairperson: Caitlin Robinson  
Council Minutes Keeper: Michelle Lam

**Executives present for the meeting were:** Isaiah Joyner (General Coordinator), Sarah Mazhero (Academic & Advocacy Coordinator), Daniel Amico (Internal Affairs Coordinator), Holly Mark-Hilton (Finance Coordinator), , Eduardo Malorni (Student Life Coordinator), Victoria Pesce (External Affairs & Mobilization Coordinator) and Malcolm Asselin (Loyola Coordinator)

**Councillors present for the meeting were:** Christopher Vaccarella (Arts & Science), Phineas Ambrose Savchenko (Fine Arts), Marlena Valenta (Arts & Science), Tzvi Hersh Filler (Gina Cody School of Engineering), Wyatt Niblett-Wilson (John Molson School of Business), Brandon Grimaldi (Arts & Science), James Hanna (Gina Cody School of Engineering), Chelsea Okankwu (John Molson School of Business), Jeremy Deneault (John Molson School of Business), S Shivaane (Arts & Science), Shlomo Tanny (John Molson School of Business), Lauren Perozek (John Molson School of Business)

**Executives absent for the meeting were:** Amy Nguyen (Sustainability Coordinator)

**Councillors absent for the meeting were:** Debra Irabor (Arts & Science), Arieh Barak (Independent), Anais Gagnon (Gina Cody School of Engineering), Roman Zelensky (Arts & Science), Sean Howard (Gina Cody School of Engineering), Jarrad Haas (Fine Arts), Harrison Kirshner (John Molson School of Business), Alexander Stojda (Gina Cody School of Engineering), Diana Lukic (Fine Arts), Shaun Sederoff (Arts & Science), Howard Issley (John Molson School of Business), Sarah Bubenheimer (Arts & Science), Nicole Nashen (Arts & Science)

### **3. CSU Services Fee Levy Referendum Questions**

**Sarah Mazhero** presents the following motion. Seconded by **Holly Mark-Hilton**. Motion passes.

#### **Concordia Student Union Legal Information Clinic**

*BE IT RESOLVED* that the following question be sent to ballot during the 2021 General Election, notwithstanding article 6.2.1.1. of the CSU's Policy on Elections and Referenda:

*Do you agree to increasing the CSU Legal Information Clinic (LIC)'s fee-levy to \$0.27 per credit (an increase of \$0.10 per credit from \$0.17 per credit), to be implemented with registration for the Fall 2021 (2021/2) term, in accordance with the University's Fee Payment, Refund and Withdrawal Policy in effect at the time and to be subsequently indexed annually to inflation in accordance with the Consumer Price Index, effective Fall 2022?*

*Agreeing to this question means you consent to amending the CSU's Special Bylaw I to reflect this change.*

#### **Concordia Student Union Off-Campus Housing and Job Resource Centre**

*BE IT RESOLVED* that the following question be sent to ballot during the 2021 General Election, notwithstanding article 6.2.1.1. of the CSU's Policy on Elections and Referenda:

*Do you agree to increasing the CSU Off-Campus Housing and Job Resource Centre (HOJO)'s fee-levy to \$0.26 per credit (an increase of \$0.06 per credit from \$0.20 per credit), to be implemented with registration for the Fall 2021 (2021/2) term, in accordance with the University's Fee Payment, Refund and Withdrawal Policy in effect*

*at the time and to be subsequently indexed annually to inflation in accordance with the Consumer Price Index, effective Fall 2022?*

*Agreeing to this question means you consent to amending the CSU's Special Bylaw I to reflect this change.*

### **Concordia Student Union Student Advocacy Centre**

*BE IT RESOLVED* that the following question be sent to ballot during the 2021 General Election, notwithstanding article 6.2.1.1. of the CSU's Policy on Elections and Referenda:

*Do you agree to increasing the CSU Student Advocacy Centre's fee-levy to \$0.40 per credit (an increase of \$0.10 per credit from \$0.30 per credit), to be implemented with registration for the Fall 2021 (2021/2) term, in accordance with the University's Fee Payment, Refund and Withdrawal Policy in effect at the time and to be subsequently indexed annually to inflation in accordance with the Consumer Price Index, effective Fall 2022?*

*Agreeing to this question means you consent to amending the CSU's Special Bylaw I to reflect this change.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED* that the preamble be sent to referendum with their respective questions.

**Sarah Mazhero:** This increase comes out of a need, demonstrated by COVID-19. We need more resources at the CSU and we need them to better aid students. It's important that we do this.

**Walter Chiyan Tom (LIC):** I'm the Manager at the LIC. I will be talking about the needs assessment for this fee levy increase. The LIC is a nonprofit organization, founded in 2007, under the CSU umbrella. The Clinic provides free legal information, and occasional accompaniment or referral to the members of the Concordia community. Our staff is comprised of 1 full-time manager, 1 full-time project manager, 2 part-time admin assistants, and 15-20 volunteer law students who work 8 hours per week. The law students provide legal information. Over the years, the office has changed dramatically, from 12 to 20 office hours, staff size, and much more. More notably, due to COVID-19, our service has evolved significantly. Cases have grown more complex, and our organization has grown in terms of needs due to added work and digital development. These changes require more resources, such as additional hours added to the admin's schedules, and additional permanent staff members and an increase in Salesforce licenses. Yet, our fee-levy has not changed in at least the past five years. Our total new salaries and benefits expenses are \$50,821.16. Our total new office expenses are \$27,068.66. Our new

annual total expenses are \$77889.82. Our current actual expense is \$135,752. Our proposal is to increase the fee-levy for the first time in at least five years, to go from 0.17 to 0.27.

Preamble: The CSU Legal Information Clinic (LIC) is an essential service for students at Concordia that provides them with legal research, assistance, accompaniment and referrals on matters ranging from Immigration, Discrimination, Sexual Violence, Criminal and Penal Fines to Consumer and Business contracts, among many other fields of law.

Since 2007, the LIC has changed dramatically, from 12 to 20 office hours, staff size, and much more. Cases have grown more complex, and our organization has grown in terms of needs due to added work and the LIC's digital development.

With the recent transition to a new online service platform and delivery system, especially in light of the COVID-19 crisis, the LIC must increase personnel and hours of its staff to better respond to growing students' demands and needs for increased legal information services and support. The LIC has not had a fee levy increase since at least the last 5 years and with the fundamental changes in the service delivery, our actual budget is at a deficit of (-\$15,159).

Therefore, in order to better respond to growing students' demands and needs for increased legal information services and support along with the increase in expenses, our proposal is to increase the LIC fee Levy from \$0.17 to \$0.27 per credit.

**Leanne Ashworth (HOJO):** We are focused on providing reliable housing and employment information, resources and referrals. We offer services for students facing issues and looking at information from various government bodies, helping students navigate their rights. An assistant manager position is necessary for HOJO to effectively support and maintain its offerings from web-based resources to student-housing partnerships. This position would support partnerships and projects, develop new resources, support the Woodnote Cooperative, grow the Homeshare project, and many more. Our financial proposal is \$52,212.16.

Preamble: The CSU Off-campus Housing and Job Resource Centre is a CSU service that works to empower, educate and support the Concordia student community by providing reliable housing and employment information, resources and referrals. HOJO addresses students' needs as they enter the rental and job market, striving to support them in learning about and exercising their rights by offering confidential legal information. We prioritize increasing awareness through campaigns, research, workshops and partnerships, as well as our housing rights website and classifieds where students can connect with credible landlords and employers. Inquiries at HOJO range from students in emergency situations to those who are just beginning to learn about their rights. Access to our services has steadily increased, even during the COVID-19 epidemic, which is not reflected in the current funding structure. The increase reflects the challenging realities of students, who are profoundly impacted by the ongoing housing crisis and

escalating financial demands. Research, campaigns, and partnership projects have suffered from a lack of staff capacity. We have also had to pause some of our creative initiatives to offer concrete solutions to students' housing and employment needs. HOJO needs an increase in personnel in order to sustain our workload and allow us to better advocate for student's rights.

**Sophie Stone** (CSU Advocacy Center): This is an essential service for students at Concordia. We provide **independent** student representation in Disciplinary Proceeding and at Tribunal Hearings. We provide assistance in drafting complaints, student representation statements and readmission applications. We inform students of the various University policies, procedures, and regulations that might affect their individual situation and make sure they are aware of their options. We support students through unfair obstacles/barriers in their academic endeavours. It is important for us to hire competent and professional staff. We want to propose two new positions, an Assistant Manager and a Research and Outreach Administrator. Our proposed fee levy increase is from 0.10/credit to 0.40/credit.

Preamble: The CSU Advocacy Centre is an essential service for students at Concordia that provides students with independent student representation in Disciplinary Proceedings, Investigations and Tribunal Hearings. It also provides independent consultation and supports through unfair obstacles/barriers to academic endeavours, including assistance in drafting complaints, special requests and readmission applications, and assistance in understanding the university's various policies and procedures. Lastly, the AC reports overarching patterns in student problems to elected student officials. Successful outreach efforts over the past few years compounded with the negative impact of Covid-19 have caused a significant increase in the number of students who consult the AC, thus both increasing the total number of cases and limiting the number of hours student advocates can spend on each case. A further negative consequence has been that research at the AC has had to cease in order to prioritize the immediate needs of students seeking assistance. The AC must increase personnel and hours in order to fulfill the increased workload and tasks that are currently not being met

**Tzvi Hersh Filler** motions to add the following to the referendum questions. Seconded by **Lauren Perozek**.

LIC:

Note: Should this pass, a student enrolled in 15 credits per semester will see a change in tuition charges for this charge of 1.50\$ per semester, meaning it will go from 2.55\$ to 4.05\$ per semester. This charge cannot currently be opted out from.

HOJO

Note: Should this pass, a student enrolled in 15 credits per semester will see a change in tuition charges for this charge of 0.90\$ per semester, meaning it will go from 3.00\$ to 3.90\$

per semester. This charge cannot currently be opted out from.

AC

Note: Should this pass, a student enrolled in 15 credits per semester will see a change in tuition charges for this charge of 1.50\$ per semester, meaning it will go from 4.50\$ to 6.00\$ per semester. This charge cannot currently be opted out from.

**Tzvi Hersh Filler:** This is for the sake of clarity. Students may misinterpret this as a charge per semester instead of per credit, despite it being clarified already in the preamble. This will also ensure that students know whether this charge can be opted out of.

**Lauren Perozek:** Sarah, by changing the wording to this, would this impact how students vote?

**Sarah Mazhero:** We tried to write this as simple as possible, so adding this note may discourage students from voting.

**Jack Alarie:** Since most fee-levies are opt-out-able, it's important to disclose. Since students aren't always keeping up with the CSU, they may not be completely informed of this. In my humble opinion, this is a good initiative as it would better inform the students.

**James Hanna:** We shouldn't have students voting while misinformed, so I'm in favour of this

**Sarah Mazhero:** The lawyer didn't believe this was necessary since you can't legally decrease student union fees

**Jack Alarie:** Most students voting for this don't know that this is opt-out-able. We now have the opportunity to add this. This will allow students to make a more informed decision.

**Lauren Perozek:** Were the lawyers not in favour of us disclosing whether this is opt-out-able?

**Sarah Mazhero:** It seemed like common sense that this isn't opt-out-able.

**James Hanna:** Just because it isn't legally necessary doesn't mean that we don't have an ethical responsibility to inform the students. I doubt this will change the outcome of the vote

**Tzvi Hersh Filler:** This doesn't change the spirit of the motion, this is adding a post-amble. This is a fee that students are forced to pay. This is an additional financial barrier to education, even if it is a necessary one, we need to be as honest with students as possible.

**Sarah Mazhero:** I'm just saying what the lawyers have stated to me

**Jack Alarie:** Students should be informed of the increase. We have an ethical obligation and a mandate obligation to inform the students. JB also recommended that the council should make referendum questions as clear as possible, so if you go against this motion you would be directly going against a JB recommendation.

**Lauren Perozek:** Breaking it down by course instead of credits may be a better way to word this. I thought that the referendum question presented to us was already clear, I just want to add that students won't be able to opt-out of this charge.

**James Hanna:** We should not mention tuition because this isn't a tuition fee, it is a student union fee.

**Tzvi Hersh Filler** motions to add the following to the referendum questions. Seconded by **Holly Mark-Hilton**. Motion passes.

LIC:

Note: should this pass, a student will see a change in student union fee charges for this charge of 0.17 per 3-credit course, meaning it will go from .51 to .81 per semester. This charge cannot currently be opted out from.

HOJO:

Note: Should this pass, this will cause a change in this student fee charge of 0.18\$ per 3 credit course, meaning it will go from 0.60\$ to 0.78\$ per 3-credit course.

This charge cannot currently be opted out from.

AC:

Note: Should this pass, this will cause a change in this student fee charge of 0.30\$ per 3 credit course, meaning it will go from 0.90\$ to 1.20\$ per 3-credit course.

This charge cannot currently be opted out from.

#### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

**S Shivaane** motions to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by **Tzvi Hersh Filler**. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 19h49.