

Annual General Meeting Minutes

April 8, 2021

Meeting

Date: April 8, 2021

Time: 4:00 P.M. to 6:10 P.M.

Place: Virtual

AGM Chair: Jennifer Reid, Chair of Board of Directors

Board Secretary: Kelly Zheng, Corporate Secretary

Minutes Taker: Naima Samuel, Governance & Strategy Coordinator



Time estimate, mins	Agenda	Action
5	1. Call to order, establishing a quorum, rules of order, opening remarks	Information
2	2. Approval of minutes of the previous AGM*	Information
20	3. Auditor’s report*	Information
5	4. Appointment of the Auditor	Information
30	5. Elections of new Directors*	Information
10	6. Confirmation of changes to the by-laws*	Information
10	7. Ratification of appointments	Information
10	<p>8. Voting period for the AGM election</p> <p>BIRT minutes of Annual General Meeting August 20, 2020 are approved.** BIRT MNP, LLP be appointed as the Auditor for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2021.** Election of five (5) candidates as Directors for the term ending April 30th, 2023 BIRT the proposal “Changes to By-law #2: Official Information” is confirmed BIRT the proposal “Changes to By-law #3 – Fees” is confirmed BIRT the proposal “Changes to By-law #5 – Board of Directors” is confirmed BIRT the proposal “Changes to By-law #7 – Council” is confirmed BIRT the proposal “Appending By-law #9: Elections” is confirmed BIRT the proposal “Housekeeping changes – Various by-laws” is confirmed BIRT the Board's appointment of Sara Drisdelle as Chief Returning Officer is ratified.** BIRT the Board's appointment of Jennifer Reid as Chair of the Board is ratified.** BIRT the Board's appointment of Kelly Zheng as Corporate Secretary is ratified.**</p>	Decision
20	<p>9. Reports</p> <p>9.1. President</p> <p>9.2. Chair of the Board</p> <p>9.3. GSEF report*</p>	Information
5	10. AGM election results	Information
10	11. Q&A	Information
1	12. Meeting adjournment	Decision

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

4:04 PM

Chair calls meeting to order at 4:04 and makes land acknowledgement. Corporate secretary confirms quorum. Chair speaks on rules of order and code of conduct noting that votes should be casted via online link.

2. Approval of minutes of previous AGM

4:07 PM

Floor opens to questions and comments regarding minutes of 2020 AGM. No questions or comments are noted.

3. Auditor's Report

4:09 PM

Accountant speaks to Auditor's report for fiscal year ending on August 31, 2020, highlighting opinion from the independent Auditor. Accountant presents briefly on financial statements and changes to GSA fund accounts, noting changes as compared with results in previous years. Impact of COVID-19 on revenues and expenses resulting from service disruption was highlighted, and Guaranteed Investment Certificates (GICs) that matured in 2020 were noted. Accountant emphasizes an added element of risk due to the pandemic that is difficult to predict. Floor opens for questions or comments regarding Auditor's report. No questions or comments are noted.

4. Appointment of Auditor

4:26 PM

Accountant provides brief information on Auditor's performance and notes GSA management and Board's recommendation to re-appoint current Auditor. Accountant notes that given the uncertainty of the current situation and unusual operations, it would be prudent to have the Auditor continue with the GSA. Floor opens for questions or comments regarding Auditor's re-appointment. No questions or comments are noted.

5. Election of new Directors

4:29 PM

Chief Returning Officer (CRO) speaks briefly to voting procedure and shares information on nine candidates running for the 5 director positions with term ending April 30, 2023. Floor opens for questions for director candidates. Question is raised to all director candidates on level of familiarity with GSA governing documents. Candidates note familiarity with by-laws, corporate mission, strategic plan, governance structure, roles and responsibilities of directors, policies and Council's contribution to work of the GSA, as well as services of the GSA. A question is raised about the most significant issue facing graduate students and how it can be addressed. Candidates note adjusting to impact of pandemic as a significant issue, particularly impact on student mental health, degree progress, TA responsibilities, workload overall, remote work expectations, and

funding. Other issues noted are racism, work-study-life balance, communications with international students, relationship with supervisors, representation of Masters students, lack of professional networking among students, and funding in general. Plans to address issues identified include: providing social space to enhance wellness; engaging with students to create social platform for sharing stories, improving communications by providing information in different languages; advocacy to ensure degree progress and work responsibilities align with students' expectations; enhancing engagement with Masters students to ensure better representation; strengthening professional connections and support among students; engaging students to understand how structures can be improved and what their future needs are to better support students during pandemic and post-pandemic.

6. Confirmation of changes to by-laws

5:07 PM

Information on changes to by-laws and rationale for proposal is shared. The floor is open for members to ask questions regarding the changes to the by-laws. No questions or comments are raised.

7. Ratification of the Officer Appointments

5:11 PM

Information on officer appointments is shared. No questions or comments are raised.

8. Voting period for AGM election

5:12 PM

Instructions on voting procedures are shared. Members are asked to vote via online survey shared through email. The floor is open for members to ask questions regarding the voting procedures. Clarification question is raised on where to cast a vote. Chair clarifies link sent via email should be used to cast votes. Chair opens poll at 5:12 PM and closes poll at 5:23 PM.

9. Reports

5:24 PM

9.1 President

5:24 PM

Billedeau (President) shares accomplishments of GSA since September 2020. Changes resulting from pandemic are highlighted, and dedicated efforts of various graduate students serving as volunteers and staff with the GSA as well as partnering groups is emphasized. Accomplishments in the areas of equity and anti-racism, student advocacy, expanded service delivery, and funding supports are shared. President notes that continuing the current momentum will require retaining and recruiting dedicated individuals to work with the GSA. Engagement with students through surveys, discussions at council, and increased communications and social media presence are highlighted, as well as expansion of opt-out criteria for health coverage and GRT services. Other accomplishments noted are securing over \$160,000 in funding support, establishing connections for donations, increased opportunities for graduate students to get involved with the GSA, and

resolution of several issues affecting graduate students. President shares plans for Spring 2021 which include continuing to pursue ten main issues affecting graduate student as identified by GSA Council, re-opening of the Graduate House, review of campus policies, Graduate Students Initiatives (GSI)-GSEF merger, hiring of General Manager, joint Board/Council workshops, and issuing of additional research contracts focused on employment law, organizational governance, Indigenous student issues, intellectual property, sexual violence, accommodation needs. The contribution of GSA staff and volunteers towards accomplishments is recognized and applauded.

9.2 Chair of the Board

5:40 PM

Reid (Board Chair) shares information on work the GSA Board has accomplished since September 2020. The Board's efforts were focused on continuity of services including sustaining the Graduate House and evaluating the health and dental plan usage and supports. Board's work also emphasized aligning Board agenda with GSA strategic plan. This was done by pursuing excellence in governance through training and development opportunities for directors, improvement to service delivery through discussions on adding benefits for members, and promoting equity, inclusion, and diversity at all levels including within the GSA. Directors' commitment and dedication to work of the Board was recognized and applauded.

9.3 Graduate Student Endowment Fund (GSEF) Report

5:45 PM

Robbins (GSEF Coordinator) shares presentation on work GSEF completed since September 2019. Information on the purpose, history and structure of GSEF is also shared. Information is provided on how contribution to GSEF is used to support graduate students through funding support for projects and conferences. Impact of pandemic on project applications was noted. Funding contribution of GSEF towards Student Emergency Support Fund (\$5,000), Graduate Student Thesis Completion Award (\$45,000), and SLC/PAC Expansion were also highlighted. Governance overhaul of the GSEF constitution was shared which included changes to bylaws and consolidation of sections in the constitution, moving items from bylaws to board policies and detailing board policies, and introducing the new position of vice-coordinator. Approval of changes require a referendum which is tentatively scheduled for mid-May 2021. Upcoming changes are shared which include new coordinator starting in May 2021, improvements to GSEF communications strategy, and implementation of new initiatives and service ideas to support graduate students. Greater investment in collaboration with the GSA will also be pursued to improve funding supports provided to graduate students specifically through merger of GSEF funding with GSA Graduate Student Initiatives (GSI) funding.

10. AGM election results

6:01 PM

Chair receives results from Chief Returning Officer and Corporate Secretary. 227 ballot submissions were received out of which 222 were valid submissions. CRO shares director elections

results and Corporate Secretary shares results for motions. All proposals offered to membership are approved:

BIRT minutes of Annual General Meeting August 20, 2020 are approved. (Reid/Zheng) (136-2-66) (y-n-a). Motion carried.

BIRT MNP, LLP be appointed as the Auditor for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2021. (Reid/Zheng) (116-5-64) (y-n-a). Motion carried.

Election of five (5) candidates who received majority support: Samira Mehrabi, Elham Mohammadi, Ruby Aigbotsua, Yi Wang, Amir Hosein Sadeghi Isfahani, as Directors for the term ending April 30th, 2023.

BIRT the proposal “Changes to By-law #2: Official Information” is confirmed. (Reid/Zheng) (111-3-65) (y-n-a). Motion carried.

BIRT the proposal “Changes to By-law #3 – Fees” is confirmed. (Reid/Zheng) (101-11-66) (y-n-a). Motion carried.

BIRT the proposal “Changes to By-law #5 – Board of Directors” is confirmed. (Reid/Zheng) (119-4-54) (y-n-a). Motion carried.

BIRT the proposal “Changes to By-law #7 – Council” is confirmed. (Reid/Zheng) (110-8-58) (y-n-a). Motion carried.

BIRT the proposal “Appending By-law #9: Elections” is confirmed. (Reid/Zheng) (119-2-56) (y-n-a). Motion carried.

BIRT the proposal “Housekeeping changes – Various by-laws” is confirmed. (Reid/Zheng) (115-1-61) (y-n-a). Motion carried.

BIRT the Board's appointment of Sara Drisdelle as Chief Returning Officer is ratified. (Reid/Zheng) (101-4-54) (y-n-a). Motion carried.

BIRT the Board's appointment of Jennifer Reid as Chair of the Board is ratified. (Reid/Zheng) (98-7-53) (y-n-a). Motion carried.

BIRT the Board's appointment of Kelly Zheng as Corporate Secretary is ratified. (Reid/Zheng) (97-5-58) (y-n-a). Motion carried.

Formal business of the meeting concluded at 6:05 PM.

11. Q&A **6:09 PM**

Floor is open for questions from members. No questions or comments are made.

12. Meeting Adjournment **6:10 PM**