

MINUTES | Rhodes University SRC General Meeting

DATE: 10 September 2018

TIME: 18h35

VENUE: RA Room, Steve Biko (Union) Building

CHAIR: Madam Vice President

Comment [WU1]: Meeting began 5 minutes late

ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES & ABSENTEES

- APOLOGIES:
 - o President: Nhlakanipho Mahlangu
 - o Academic Councilor: Siyabonga Malaza
 - o Secretary General: Nondumiso Msezane (*in office at the time of minute-taking*)
 - o Projects Councilor: Tebogo Molathegi
 - o Oppidan Councilor: Mbaso Ngcoza
- All other Council Members were present. No further apologies.

SRC 2019: VOTING FOR MEMBER OF EXECUTIVE

- (This meeting began with the incoming Council's voting for members of the Executive)
- *This was overseen by Messrs. Ofei, Booie, and Mbaso representing the IEB*

SRC 2018: VOTING FOR MEMBER OF EXECUTIVE

- The present Council elected Community Engagement Councilor, Miss Unathi Mabukane, into the vacancy in the Council's Executive following the resignation of Mx. Phumelele Nkomozakhe

MATTERS ARISING

- Unako
- Nkoli-Fassie
- Alumnus Status

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF 3 SEPTEMBER 2018

- Mr. Ofei noted some errata in the minutes referred to above. He noted that, in addition to some spelling errors, he had been misrepresented in regards to comments that he had made in reference to the Secretary General. He had **not** said that “the Secretary General ought to consider resignation”. **INSTEAD** he had noted that he had wished the Secretary General were present so as to furnish the Council with the relevant information as concerns her duties as Secretary General.
- Treasurer and Acting Secretary General noted a number of spelling and grammatical errors; as well as the exclusion of the name of the Environmental Councilor, Mr. Luthando Dayimani

ZIMSOC

- International Affairs Councilor reported that there were issues arising in respect of the Committee of Zimsoc; she reported that a student received nasty messages from the Projects Member of Zimsoc in connection with comments which said student had made in relation to Zimsoc to a friend – and not the Committee itself
- In respect hereof, International Affairs Councilor recommended that disciplinary measures be looked into
- Media Councilor noted that in doing so it must be borne in mind that a single person does not represent the entirety of the Committee nor the society itself
- International Councilor requested that Sports and Societies Councilor could sit in on the relevant meeting to deal with the issue (**SPORTS AND SOCIETIES COUNCILOR CONCURRING**)

HERITAGE DAY

- International Affairs Councilor reported that the relevant emails had been sent to the various stakeholders; she reminded the Council that the Heritage Day observance is scheduled to take place on 24th September 2018; to this end the International Affairs Councilor is working with the International Office
- Media Councilor reported that her school email is non-operational and requested that all relevant information is to be sent to her Gmail account, which she will disseminate to the rest of Council
- Residence Councilor requested information regarding operational timelines, as well as other help which the International Affairs Councilor might need for this project
- International Affairs Councilor noted that SRC Hall Representatives are to sell tickets; she also noted that invitations cannot be sent as yet given the need to concretize finances etc.
- Vice President asked what the Council is required to do on the day of the observance
- International Affairs Councilor asked merely for the Council to be present; help might also be needed to set up
- Residence Councilor asked if the Council would be paying for tickets
- International Affairs Councilor noted that information in respect thereof is yet to be confirmed

INON AFRICA

- Treasurer General reported that he had been in contact with the CEO of Inon Africa; he explained that the organization is a developmental company for students which expressed interest in performing a series of activities on campus which are reportedly to be of an interactive nature
- To this end, Treasurer General reported that Inon Africa required the buy-in of the Council; he reported further that a meeting is to be held on 19th September 2018 in Johannesburg, and that the project itself will commence in July 2019
- Treasurer General noted that contact would be made with the Director of Student Affairs and the Registrar to commence the project in July 2019
- *Council resolved to passing on contact details of Inon Africa to the 2019 Council*

Comment [WU2]: Spelling?

UBUNTU FUND

- Treasurer General reported that due to last minute falling-through of the venue, the Benefit Concert would have to be postponed or cancelled altogether
- Treasurer General reported that, initially, the Drama Department had been booked, which productions of its own pending; the Drama Department had informed the Treasurer General last minute that these productions were no longer pending but would indeed take place on Friday, 14th September 2018, and that these productions would require setting up of the Drama Department's stage commencing Wednesday, 12th September 2018 – the day before the Benefit Concert is scheduled to take place
- Treasurer General also noted that Thomas Pringle auditorium had also pulled out on Friday night
- Treasurer General expressed the view that holding the Concert in the Great Hall would require R25 000.00 at the least to prepare for the Concert, and would thus be too expensive
- Treasurer General also reported that the tickets had not sold out, and thus either postponing or cancelling would not cause too great a level of disappointment
- Treasurer General also noted that he is to have a meeting with an individual named Nicky, with a view to hold the Concert on 28th September 2018 in the venue to be provided by this individual; Treasurer General noted that this was a good opportunity however there are not enough details in respect of this alternative arrangement
- Treasurer General reported further that Unathi Msengana had not yet been contacted in respect of these unfortunate developments as the Council would need also to be privy to such liaison
- Treasurer General also noted that the National English Literary Museum was too small to host the Concert, and the halls of schools would be too expensive in the same way as the Great Hall;
- Treasurer General proposed to postpone the Concert pending contact with Unathi Msengana, whereupon it is to be decided, if she is unavailable for the later date, to cancel the Concert altogether
- Student Benefits Councilor noted concern about postponing the Concert as this is an exam term

- Mr. Ofei concurred that if she is available on the 28th September 2018, the Concert should be postponed to that date, and if she is altogether unavailable, the Concert ought to be cancelled
- Environmental Affairs Councilor suggested that even if Unathi Msengana is unavailable, that the Concert be comprised solely of the supporting acts instead
- Community Engagement Councilor suggested that alternative venues be looked into like the City Hall or the School of Languages
- Mr. Ofei noted that holding the event at a place like the School of Languages would depend on the weather, and if the weather is bad the Concert cannot take place
- Treasurer General noted the need to get either of these venues set up, and that the cost would be too high
- Treasurer General reported further that the Drama Department would be re-availing itself for the end of September 2018 to make up for the falling through of their initial agreement in respect of venue
- Sports and Societies Councilor requested information in respect of ticket sales
- Treasurer General was unable to supply an exact number, and noted that this information is known in greater detail by the Projects Councilor; however, his general impression is that ticket sales are not going well
- Vice President suggested that the show be cancelled altogether and the proceeds from ticket sales be taken and put directly into the Ubuntu Fund; she concurred with the Treasurer General in minimizing costs, as the alternative would result in too much input for too little yield; she also requested to know if an appropriate weigh up of costs versus profits was conducted
- Treasurer General noted that if the event is to be postponed and held at the Monument, they would not be spending a cent; he reported further that their initial plans to use the Drama Department or Thomas Pringle would amount to R7 000.00 which could easily be recovered from selling even half the tickets; he noted that the City Hall would be far more expensive by comparison
- **RESOLVED:** Unathi is to be contacted regarding the possibility of postponement; if she is available on the later date, the Concert is to take place then; if she is not, the Concert would have to be cancelled altogether

Comment [WU3]: Presumably Thomas Pringle?

- Mr. Ofei noted that he knew that pulling off this project would be hard, and commended the Council on working very hard to make it a possibility; he requested that the Council not be discouraged by this set back

LEAVERS

- Treasurer General requested the Council to furnish him with information regarding the logistics hereof, and noted that Community Engagement Councilor had so far been the only member of Council to revert to him in this regard
- *Agenda item postponed*

UNAKO

- Vice President reported that Unako, a non-profit organization, had contacted the Treasurer General the previous week; she reported that she had directed them to the Career Centre; they are presently in contact with the Director of Student Affairs
- Vice President reported that Unako would like to hold an event on 27th September 2018; she reported further that an individual named Lunga with whom the Vice President had liaised requested that the Council provide food for this event
- Vice President reported that she had requested Unako, through Lunga, to send forward an official email which upon reception would be forwarded to the Director of Student Affairs
- Media Councilor asked if the event would take place during the day
- Vice President noted that it would indeed take place during the day; however, the minor details are yet to be confirmed and would be discussed closer to the date

NKOLI-FASSIE

- Media Councilor reported that she had received an email from Nkoli-Fassie requesting to use the wall by the library; she reported that she thought it prudent to relay this information to Council given its strained relations with the society
- Vice President requested of the Sports and Societies Councilor to furnish the Council with information in respect of the disciplinary action to be undertaken against the society

- Sports and Societies Councilor reported that he had not received formal complaints against the society, and further that he could not find anything tangible to link the conduct of the society to any infraction of policy
- Student Benefits Councilor noted that the issue at hand is a complex and difficult one to grapple with; he suggested that if the wall is in use by the Council when the society requires it, then their request to use the wall would have to fail
- Media Councilor noted that she is the only person who knows the calendar and schedule of the use of the wall
- Mr. Ofei noted that the Council must go through the society policy, and refer also to the student disciplinary code; he noted that the Council also exercise caution and meticulous care when dealing with societies which represent marginalized identities like Nkoli-Fassie; to this end the Council would have to follow the correct procedures and policies to the letter to avert the possibility of accusations arising of victimization
- Vice President concurring with Mr. Ofei urged the rest of Council to look through the relevant policies and codes of conduct to find any disciplinary infractions which the society may have committed, and to send these to Sports and Societies Councilor before the end of day on Friday, 14th September
- Student Benefits Councilor requested that he be furnished with the Societies Policy
 - o **RESOLVED:** link to be forwarded to all Council members
- Treasurer General advised the playing of petty politics; he urged the Council to allow Nkoli-Fassie to make use of the wall and merely to monitor what they write on it
- Sports and Societies Councilor concurring with the Treasurer General, noted that the society serves a much bigger purpose than its present unsavoury interactions with the Council, and it would be unjust to disallow their use of the wall purely on petty politics
- Media Councilor concurring with the Sports and Societies Councilor, noted that their use of the wall is also linked to Pride Week which is a bigger issue than the society itself as well as the Council
- Media Councilor also cautioned against societies which use sensitive issues to fight their personal battles
- Vice President instructed the Media Councilor to use her own discretion in respect of the wall and Nkoli-Fassie

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Student Benefits and Community Engagement Councilors reported that they would be transporting clothing to the community; further details are to be confirmed
- Media Councilor requested that fellow Councilors not forget to send their voice-notes; she requested that they be 30 seconds in length; the voice-notes would have to be sent by 18h00
 - o **RESOLVED:** failure to submit voice-notes would result in a deduction of 5% from Councilors' honoraria
- Residence Councilor reported that a "thank you" letter would have to be drafted to the sponsors of the Noodle Drive; she reported also that she would be involved in the re-doing of the meal review
- International Affairs Councilor reported that her plans were on hold pending the occasion of the Ubuntu Fund Concert

CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

- Mr. Ofei reported that the date for Constitutional Review is yet to be determined
- Vice President suggested that it take place sometime in the present week
- Student Benefits Councilor requested to be made aware of the most contested parts of the Constitution
- Vice President suggested that Constitutional Review take place on Thursday, 13th September 2018 at 18h00
- Mr. Ofei noted that the corrections to be made are mostly fairly trivial, although a thorough perusal is necessary
- Student Benefits Councilor requested that the time be pushed back to 18h30 to allow for the early arrival of those Councilors who have practicals in the late afternoon
 - o **RESOLVED:** the time to meet is moved to 18h30
- Vice President suggested that the Council divide itself into smaller groups to make perusal of the entire document easier (**COUNCIL CONCURRING**)
- Vice President also suggested that the draft following the Review be sent to someone in the Linguistics Department (**COUNCIL CONCURRING**)
- **IN RESPECT OF DEDUCTIONS OF HONORARIUM, RESOLVED:**
 - o Attendance is compulsory

- Acting Secretary General is to decide on the validity of excuses
- Apologies due 24 hours before the Review is scheduled to commence
- 5% deduction per 5 minute interval of lateness
- Mr. Ofei reported that exams are coming up, and urged Councilors to meet with their respective mentors
- Mr. Ofei further reported that Hall Representative elections are coming, and that nominations would open on 19th September 2018; he also reminded the Council of the importance of Dining Hall visits which are to take place from the day the nominations open until the day that they close

ALUMNUS STATUS

- Mr. Ofei reported that the Council's intention to revoke the alumnus status of Phumelele Nkomozakhe had been made known to the Harassment Office; he noted that the time for revoking Nkomozakhe's alumnus status is unbecoming, and that it would look like a vendetta and targeted victimization; he urged the Council to wait until the "storm blows over" before instituting proceedings to revoke Nkomozakhe's status
- Treasurer General contended that he did not see the point in waiting as the decision the Council had made to revoke Nkomozakhe's alumnus status had been made on principle and not as a vendetta
- Mr. Ofei stressed the importance of optics and perception; he noted that representations must happen and Nkomozakhe's alumnus status cannot be revoked without her being able to represent herself; he again urged the Council to wait until things had settled down
- Student Benefits Councilor noted that an email containing notification to revoke Nkomozakhe's alumnus status had already been sent
- Mr. Ofei noted that there is no need to rush; he advised the Council against speedy and hasty action
- Treasurer General noted his concern that Mr. Ofei had taken the decision with the Harassment Office to delay the institution of the revocation of Nkomozakhe's alumnus status without consulting the Council

- Mr. Ofei explained that Nkomozakhe would not be able to represent herself even if the revocation proceedings go forward as she reportedly does not feel safe in the vicinity of the Council; he urged that the Council deal with the matter in a sensitive manner

PROJECTS COUNCILOR ENTERS MEETING AT 20H23

- Sports and Societies Councilor concurring with Mr. Ofei, noted that a delay in instituting the revocation proceedings would give the Council time “to get our ducks in order”
- Media Councilor noted that Nkomozakhe is playing a very smart game; and noted that if the Council pushes to institute the proceedings now it would look like bullying
- Vice President concurs with Mr. Ofei
- International Affairs Councilor noted that harassment cases take very long to resolve, and asked what would happen if the year ended and the harassment case has not yet been resolved fully
- Mr. Ofei noted the importance of sticking to procedure even in that case
 - o Vice President concurring
- Residence Councilor noted that she does not like the idea of buying time, and expressed the belief that the Council was being held at ransom unjustifiably
- Treasurer General suggested that a vote be cast to decide on the way forward
- Mr. Ofei noted that if any of the Councilors themselves felt harassed that they ought to report it, too
- Mr. Ofei requested the Council to explain to him why time was such an important factor to them
- Treasurer General asked what time has to do with the principled decision taken by the Council; he expressed the view that it does not matter when the revocation proceedings take place
- Residence Councilor noted that a case by laid against Nkomozakhe as she had left with the Council’s money
- Treasurer General and Mr. Ofei noted that this was in fact not the case
- Community Engagement Councilor expressed the view that Nkomozakhe had done nothing for the Council the entire year, and that timing is important
- Student Benefits Councilor suggested that the situation be left to pay itself out, and noted that the revocation of Nkomozakhe’s status depends on the Council itself

- **VOTE:**
 - o 2 Councilors voted to institute proceedings to remove the alumnus status of Nkomozakhe immediately
 - o 5 Councilors voted to wait until the conclusion of the case
 - o 3 Councilors abstained
- **RESOLVED:** proceedings to revoke the alumnus status of Phumelele Nkomozakhe to be instituted upon the conclusion of the harassment case

HONORARIUM

- Mr. Ofei noted that the decision which the Council had taken to award the Treasurer General, in his capacity as the Acting Secretary General, with the Honorarium of the sitting Secretary General would set a universally detrimental precedent
- Projects Councilor clarified that the decision taken by the Council was to award the Acting Secretary General with the honorarium of the Secretary General in the event of prolonged absence on the part of the sitting Secretary General
- Mr. Ofei noted that even this would set a bad precedent, and would have serious and negative implications on the future; he noted that there exists among the Councilors some confusion over the roles and entitlements of the members of the Executive, noting further that members of the Executive do not get a double-honorarium
- Media Councilor concurring with Mr. Ofei, recalled from her last term in office that no one would receive the honorarium of an office the workload of which a given Councilor undertakes
- Projects Councilor requested to know, also for purposes of the coming Constitutional Review, how long someone can be absent for
- Mr. Ofei noted that the absenteeism of the Secretary General is not due to lack of performance; he noted that the human aspect should be taken into account
- Student Benefits Councilor noted that the job of the Secretary General is voluminous and that it is difficult to function in the absence of a Secretary General
- Projects Councilor noted that this is not the first time that the Secretary General had taken ill; and that this was causing inefficiency in how the Council was functioning
- Student Benefits Councilor suggested the formal election of an Acting Secretary General who is as yet not part of the Executive

- Treasurer General also noted that bringing someone external and splitting the workload of the Secretary General by week would be undesirable as it would compromise continuity
- **VOTE:**
 - o 0 Councilors voted for the Treasurer General to assume the workload of the Secretary General in the capacity of Acting Secretary General
 - o 6 Councilors voted to split the workload of the Secretary General among the members of the Executive
 - o 4 abstentions
- **RESOLVED:** Executive to split the workload of the Secretary General among themselves

REPORTS BACK

- International Affairs Councilor:
 - o Conducted first hand over session
 - o Reminds Council about Heritage Day observance
- Community Engagement Councilor & Projects Councilor (both):
 - o Had been working on the Benefit Concert
 - o Conducted first hand over session
- Student Benefits Councilor and Sports and Societies Councilor (both):
 - o Had been working on the Benefit Concert
- Media Councilor:
 - o Made promotional video for the Benefit Concert
 - o Held radio show last week
 - o Meeting with radio people in the coming days
- Residence Councilor:
 - o Meeting held with Hall Representatives
 - o Conducted first hand-over session
- Environmental Councilor:
 - o Meeting held with the Environmental institutions on campus; could not attend that meeting
 - o Is in the process of assessing the nominees for the Environmental Awards
 - o Had been working on the Benefit Concert

- Treasurer General/Acting Secretary General:
 - o Had been working on the Benefit Concert
 - o Held first hand over session
 - o Attended NSFAS meeting in Johannesburg; reported that this was fruitful; reported that there is new admin; expressed faith in this new admin

- Vice President:
 - o Had been working on the Benefit Concert
 - o Will commence hand over process on the coming Thursday

MEETING ADJOURNED

NEXT MEETING ON 17TH SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 18H30