

# MINUTES | Rhodes University SRC General Meeting

DATE: 11 February 2019  
TIME: 18h30 – 22h20  
VENUE: RA Room, Steve Biko Building  
CHAIR: Mr. Samkelo Mngadi

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## **ATTENDANCE**

- No apologies received by Secretary General
- All members of Council present

## **MATTERS ARISING**

- Community Engagement Councilor's Agenda Item
- Nkoli-Fassie
- Sponsorships
- Report back from Minister
- RedBull Update
- Financial Appeals

## **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF 04 FEBRUARY 2019**

- President requested that Councilor's who wish information to be amended/edited in the Minutes do so by referring to the exact page number and agenda item of the Minutes in question, so as to ensure procedural efficiency
- Secretary General noted an erratum on page 10 of the Minutes of 04 February under the Student Support and Development Officer's agenda item, wherein it is written that he (the Secretary General) was requested by Mr. Ofei to "respond to student defence immediately"
  - o *Secretary General clarified that this was in relation to an email sent to him re: student to which he must respond*

- Environmental Councilor noted that under the agenda item relating to the ad hoc arrangements for Honorarium Deductions, comments that she had made and was asked to withdraw were left out of the Minutes; she noted that because she had not withdrawn those comments they should be reflected in the Minutes
  - o Mr. Ofei noted that not everything the Councilor's say in a given meeting necessarily has to be minuted; simply those comments/suggestions/remarks which are of consequence to the present discussion must be minuted; decisions and the underlying rationale behind a decision must be reflected in the Minutes
  - o Secretary General also noted if Councilors explicitly wish for specific comments/remarks/suggestions to be minuted, they must make that request and they will be reflected in the Minutes
- *COUNCIL RESOLVED TO CONFIRM MINUTES PENDING EDITIONS AS PER THE ABOVE*

#### **GENERAL COMMENT**

- Environmental Councilor wished to express her congratulations and praise of the Projects Manager as well as the Projects Team for a job well done with RU Jamming

#### **COUNCIL RELATONSHIP WITH PROJECTS TEAM**

- Secretary General noted that he has received information suggesting that the relationship between Council and the Projects Team is not as healthy as it ought to be; he requested that the relevant issues relating thereto be hashed out fully so as to mend this relationship
- Oppidan Councilor requested to know what exactly was said on the WhatsApp group and under what context; she wished for the comments to be clarified whereby the Projects Team had expressed the desire for Council to be absent for their braai

- Mr. Ofei noted that a meeting must be held to resolve the issues which are at play; he noted further that no SRC substructure may make the call to exclude the SRC from their functions precisely because they are substructures
- Mr. Ofei noted further that the Projects Team has been hard-working and generally “on-point” this year, and offers his compliments to the Projects Manager in this regard
- Vice-President noted that Council ought not forget that Council has had a very intense couple of weeks and a braai of their own ought to be organized
- Projects Councilor, in agreement with Mr. Ofei, noted that the Projects Team does not actually have a problem with the Council on principle; she clarified that the issue at play is when a project is planned very specifically and an on-the-spot directive is given to the Projects Team by the Councilors; she requested that if such a situation arises that the call to do so be made by the relevant Councilor involved in the specific project; she requested that in future there be coherence in the instructions given out
- In relation to the braai, the Projects Manager clarified further that the Projects Team wanted to celebrate their successes so far together as a “family unit” on their own, and the Projects Manager herself did not want to over-extend the events budget by having too many people present
- Mr. Ofei sought clarity as to whether it was the Team’s discretion or that of the Projects Manager to disinvite the Council
- Projects Manager noted that she and her team at large are for the most indifferent to the Council’s attendance
- Mr. Ofei expressed the view that the Projects Manager owes her Team an apology for possibly having caused friction between the Council and the Team itself, through the wording of certain remarks; he made a broader request that Councilors do not misrepresent people whether purposefully or inadvertently; he noted further that there is nothing wrong with the Council having events together with its subsidiary bodies (substructures), and that in fact it is preferable that they do happen so as to create professional familiarity between the Council and its substructures
- Mr. Ofei noted that if the Projects Manager’s qualms relate to cost, that she alert the Treasurer General thereto so that she can make funds available

- Secretary General *inter alia* would like the Projects Team to know that they were not the only ones working on projects; and that whenever the Projects Team has had events the entire Council had been present; he requested that where work is concerned, credit be given where it is due to all parties involved
- Environmental Councilor reiterated that it be made abundantly clear that the Projects Team is a substructure of the Council and the implications of that also be made abundantly clear

[ENVIRONMENTAL COUNILOR EXCUSED HERSELF FROM THE REST OF THE MEETING]

- Projects Manager requested that the rest of Council not misunderstand her; she clarified that the braai is not to disregard the work of Council, and that it is merely a mode of self-affirmation on the part of the Team; she added that there are times where she feels that she is acting alone, and that a lot of responsibility is placed on her shoulders solely
- Mr. Ofei noted that the braai has always had the Council present; he noted that the Council **must** be present at functions as a matter of course; he noted further that if the Councilors feel overwhelmed by responsibilities which they assume alone, they must inform the rest of Council so that the workload is shared accordingly; he also noted that no Council represents a constituency of students, therefore the loyalty of Councilors is due not to a specific constituency but to the student body at large
- Projects Manager noted that she has informed the Secretary General of the responsibilities on her shoulders, and was under the impression that her relationship with the Projects Team is one of sole responsibility and accountability
- Secretary General requested that the Projects Manager think about how honest she had been in relation to her submissions to Council; in regard to the support which she has ostensibly not been receiving from Council as well as her relationship with the Projects Team – first both are presented as problematic and then they are not
- Oppidan Councilor requested that the submissions of Councilors stay relevant to the present agenda item; and requested that there be provisions in the Honorarium Deduction policy for dishonesty

- Community Engagement noted that the present issue has been exhausted and requests that Council move forward
- Projects Manager noted that she takes strong exception to the suggestion that she is being dishonest, and that it is not fair to make assumptions regarding the events of the Projects Team
- President closed off the discussion by requesting that bad relationships between the Council and its substructures not be allowed to fester into something worse; in summation, amends need to be made for the breakdown in communication
- *COUNCIL RESOLVED TO ATTEND THE EVENTS OF SUBSTRUCTURES; THE BUDGET PROBLEM IS TO BE SORTED OUT IN COLLABORATION WITH THE TREASURER GENERAL; IF COUNCILORS FEEL OVERWHELMED BY WORK THEN THEY SHOULD SPEAK OUT*

#### **HONORING REV. SIMON GQUBULE**

- Secretary General requested that people give due regard to the memory of Rev. Simon Gqubule, who *inter alia* initiated a number of community-based education programs; proposes that Hilltop Dining Hall be named in his honour
- Mr. Ofei noted his agreement that he was a great man; noted further that Secretary General is likely to gain positive headway in succeeding with his proposition; he suggested that even if it does not come to pass that the Dining Hall be named after him, that at least a memorial lecture be inaugurated in his honour, and powerful speakers be attracted; he suggested that both of these ideas be pushed forwards
- Oppidan Councilor noted that while she is on board with the idea, this proposition ought to have been presented to Council in consultation with the appropriate portfolio on Council, namely the Residence Councilor
- Projects Manager noted that naming buildings after people incurs some kind of political association, and requested that clarity be presented in relation hereto where Rev. Gqubule is concerned

- Secretary General noted that he made the proposition purely on the basis of the inspirational character of his personhood; and noted that political association ought not immediately disqualify the proposition
- Mr. Ofei noted that most buildings named after people were named for politically affiliated individuals; he noted that the extent to which people make that connection is dependent on the distance of the thought-association between that individual and their political affiliation
- Community Engagement Councilor noted his support for the proposition and recommend that Secretary General and Residence Councilor discuss and liaise with the relevant leadership in order to push the proposition forward

*GENERAL CONSENSUS REACHED TO PUSH FORWARD THE PROPOSITIONS OF NAMING THE DINING HALLS*

**DISCRIMINATION AND HARRASMENT POLICY MEETING**

- Secretary General began by circulating the report relevant to the present agenda item and noted that it is still in its consultation stages; he noted that the next stage is a formal committee where the relevant issues are to be picked up on and discussed; he noted further that the present document is to be edited further by Dr. Mkhize
- Vice-President noted that the Councilors ought to sit and make editions, which will be due to Dr. Mkhize on 15 March
- Oppidan Councilor noted that Council at large has been placed at a disadvantage, and requests that an apology be made to Council by Secretary General regarding the events of the meeting in consultation with Dr. Mkhize; she noted further that the representation from Council at this meeting was extremely disproportionate in favour of the male voice as no women Councilors were in attendance
- Vice-President noted that it is for precisely this reason that additional comments have been called for
- Mr. Ofei asked if Activism Councilor was present at the meeting; he noted that Secretary General ought to be severely penalized, as more effort was required to communicate the particulars of the meeting in question; he noted further that

Council ought not to attend meetings where documentation relating to that meeting is not given in good time; he noted that Secretary General owes Council an apology

- Secretary General noted that his attendance of the meeting in question was based on the principles of humility and humanity; he apologized to Council for not having cancelled that meeting; he requested that no one blame him in respect of bad communication for a meeting which he had not convened
- Mr. Ofei noted his dissatisfaction with the Secretary General's utterances; he noted that not only is the Secretary General proposing double-standards but is also condescending in tone; he noted that the meeting in question ought not to have happened in accordance with the directive from Council at large; he noted his applause for those who did not attend that meeting
- Residence Councilor cautioned the Secretary General against his comments regarding "humility and humanity" because they have negative implications for the rest of the Councilors
- Vice-President noted that the decision to attend the meeting actually does not reflect negatively on Council; he had undertaken to attend the meeting in question so as not to embarrass Council as Dr. Mkhize had already arrived
- Community Engagement Councilor apologized to Council for deviating from the Council's directive; and that he had undertaken to attend the meeting under fear of Council being viewed as disorganized by Dr. Mkhize's office; the meeting was undertaken with the proviso that it would not be binding

*COUNCIL RESOLVED TO CONVENING A SECOND MEETING WITH DR. MKHIZE*

### **STUDENT GOVERNANCE COLLOQUIUM**

- Secretary General requested that this agenda point be cancelled as he was not ready to present it to Council in the present meeting

*COUNCIL RESOLVED TO MOVE THIS AGENDA ITEM AS WELL AS AGENDA ITEM RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATON PLAN 2019-2022 TO THE NEXT MEETING*

## **RADIO SHOW**

- Media Councilor noted that the radio show scheduled to take place the following day had been cancelled; she reported that a meeting must be set up with RMR because there is ostensibly content repetition on the SRC's show with another show
- She noted that Council photo would take place on Saturday @10h00 at the Council Chambers; and a video would be taken at the Admin Buildings
- President requested if the date and time for the taking of these photos and video can be moved, as he has an unavoidable prior commitment
- Projects Manager suggested that video footage be taken from the braai in the intermediary
- Mr. Ofei noted that posters for the SRC had to have been completed by the end of O-Week and wonders why that was not the case; he added that doing a poster now would be nonsensical given the timing with by-elections and the induction of new Council members; he added that failure to meet the deadline for the submission of voice notes for the Radio show would result in penalization in respect of Honorarium
- Media Councilor further clarified that the repetitive content in question relates to the reading of Confessions from Facebook on RU Anonymous

### *COUNCIL RESOLVED TO FURTHER DISCUSSING THESE MATTERS OFFLINE*

- Oppidan Councilor suggested that photos be taken on Sunday afternoon

### *COUNCIL RESOLVED TO TAKE PHOTOS ABOVEMENTIONED ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON*

- Vice-President suggested that photos of all current Council members be taken at the Council Chambers and wait for the 08 March to finalize the poster
- Mr. Ofei noted his agreement with Vice-President

### *COUNCIL RESOLVED TO UNDERTAKE THE VICE-PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL*

## **STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT OFFICER**

- Mr. Ofei noted that a University Council meeting is scheduled to take place on 07 March 2019, and the President and Vice-President should read up on the relevant material in preparation for this meeting; he also added remarks about the SRC stamp and emblem on societies posters being compulsory for societies to advertise their events
- Mr. Ofei reminded the Council that Societies training would take place on 23 February 2019 at 09h00 until 14h00, and one of the salient issues to be discussed there relates to societies discipline
- Mr. Ofei noted further that donations of textbooks have been made and requested that the Academic Councilor head up the dissemination thereof
- Mr. Ofei noted further that the Council is full of great ideas but is lax in terms of the implementation thereof ; he suggested that there be reports back on these projects and a SWOT analysis done thereupon to maximize chances of success of projects
- Mr. Ofei also requested that haste be made in the submission of the Council's year plan; he also suggested the implementation of delegation and time-management training
- Mr. Ofei also noted that the participation of Council members in meetings is till problematic and needs to be addressed
- Mr, Ofei reported that by-elections are coming up and if nominations do not pick up, that Dining Hall visits be conducted by Council; he noted that the Grazzle is compulsory for all Councilors to attend, as well as Inauguration
- Mr. Ofei noted that punctuality of attendance at meetings by Council members has so far been very good and urged Council to keep it up; he also requested that Council continuously publish material reporting on the work that they have been doing so far
- Mr. Ofei also reported that in light of the success at RU Jamming, ABSA is looking to sponsor RU Jamming and to host it at the Monument

## **Nkoli-Fassie**

- Residence Councilor reported that he has felt provoked by the society, and requests that the society be reprimanded by Council
- Vice-President asked if Societies Policy review has to take the same procedural steps as a Constitutional Review
  - o Mr. Ofei clarified that this is not the case
- Activism Councilor reported that a meeting with Nkoli-Fassie is due to take place on 12 February at 18h00 in the RA Room
- Mr. Ofei cautioned the Councilors against engaging with Nkoli-Fassie on the basis of emotion; the Council must have a clear strategy in place to engage with them regarding the issue of Consent Talks
- Secretary General clarified that Dr. Mkhize has offered her services to conduct the Consent Talks
- Community Engagement Councilor requested that r. Mkhize's proposition be followed up on and consolidated

*COUNCIL RESOLVED TO MAKING GOOD ON DR. MKHIZE'S OFFER TO CONDUCT CONSENT TALKS*

*COUNCIL FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THOSE IN ATTENDANCE FOR THE MEETING WITH NKOLI-FASSIE WILL BE TREASURER GENERAL, THE PROJECTS MANAGER, THE RESIDENCE COUNCILOR, THE ACTIVISM AND TRANSFORMATION COUNCILOR, AS WELL AS THE PRESIDENT*

## **SAUS REPORT BACK**

- President reported that following the meeting with the Minister of Higher Education and Training no timeline was given for the resolution of the problems arising; he reported that the instruction from NSFAS to the universities around the country is to allow those students who are both academically deserving and have historical NSFAS-related debt to register for the academic year on the proviso that the students in question sign an acknowledgement of debt
- President reported that a statement from the Minister is to be released by Friday, 15 February at the latest

- Student Benefits Councilor noted the importance of acknowledging that the above arrangements apply to academically deserving students, as opportunities to access NSFAS constitute a zero-sum game
  - o President clarified that the above arrangements would apply to students who receive recommendation from the university to further their studies
- President also reported that other universities' SRC's would be continuing with the shutdown until demands are met; and that the position of Council ought not to change in this regard – that the Council stands in solidarity with the other universities and for business to be conducted as usual at this University

### **FINANCIAL APPEALS**

- Student Benefits Councilor reported that he is still busy with appeals, and that this affecting registration; registration would be extended until Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> February; the only problem in relation hereto is the cost of late registration and the accumulation of debt by those who are registering late precisely because of financial constraints
- Vice-President reported that some students' appeals were not considered because of debt

*COUNCIL RESOLVED TO DELEGATE THE TASK OF MEETING WITH THE REGISTRAR TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE VICE-PRESIDENT*

### **PAPER PLANES INITIATIVE (REDBULL)**

- Projects Manager reported that a meeting would be held with Samantha to discuss a way forward on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at 15h00

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COUNCILOR'S AGENDA ITEM**

- Community Engagement announced that he would be retiring from the SRC owing to unresolvable circumstances arising; he noted that despite this he would continue to avail himself for service to the Council

- Secretary General noted his regret in the circumstances leading to the Community Engagement Councilor's resignation and noted his invaluable contribution to Council and the student body at large
- These sentiments were reiterated by both Mr. Ofei, Vice-President, and President

**MEETING ADJOURNED**