ONTARIO TECH STUDENT UNION

# BOARD MEETING MINUTES

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| **GROUP** | Ontario Tech Student Union (OTSU) |
| **LOCATION** | In-person (SHA 136) |
| **DATE & TIME** | Sep 23, 2025 , 6:11 PM – 10:07 PM |
| **NOTE TAKER** | Kylie Zamora-Matundan |
| **ATTENDEES** | **Directors (in-person):** Faculty of Science & Chair, Maryam Baz; Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science & Vice-Chair, Sifatul Mostafi; Faculty of Business and Information Technology, Craigton Corda; Faculty of Graduate Studies, Sergio Maljuf Suarez; Faculty of Social Science & Humanities, Keenan Howells;<br><br>**Directors (online):** Faculty of Health Science, Ifra Khurram; Faculty of Education, Cherryl Morgan;<br><br>**Executives:** President, Eloghosa Avenbuan; VP Student Life, Tuirani Kerfelec; VP Downtown, Kailey Haskell; VP Student Affairs, Anwoy Barua<br><br>**Staff:** Executive Director, Brian Robson; Financial Controller, Mayooran Thurairajah; HR Generalist & Chief Returning Officer, Kylie Zamora-Matundan<br><br>**Guests:** None |
| **REGRETS** | N/A |

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called into order at 6:11 p.m. Moved by C. Corda and seconded by K. Howells. Motion carried.

## 2. TERRITORIAL RECOGNITION

## 3. AGENDA APPROVAL

DISCUSSION

No Discussion

RESOLUTION

Moved by S. Maljuf Suárez and seconded by K. Howells. Motion carried.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve the agenda for Sep 23, 2025 .

## 4. MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

DISCUSSION

No Discussion

RESOLUTION

Moved by C. Corda and seconded by K. Howells. Motion carried.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve the Jul 31, 2025 and Aug 21, 2025 meeting minutes.

## 5. EXECUTIVE REPORTS

*See the full executive reports on the OTSU website.*

### 5.1 President

- The team is currently hiring for two unionized roles, Wellness and Support Services Coordinator and Web Developer, and two student positions through committee recruitment. In preparation for the OUSA General Assembly (October 23 to 26), four student delegates are being recruited, with efforts including collaboration with the Indigenous Office to boost engagement. The delegate posting is live on Bamboo HR. Orientation activities featured O-Fest during the first two weeks, engaging many students and promoting OTSU. Meetings were held with students regarding the Health and Dental plan. Additionally, the Student Deal Project, developed with the VP of Student Life, is now live on the website, with outreach to local establishments to apply student discounts.

- Committee updates were also reviewed and included in the executive report.

DISCUSSION

- The board inquired about the status of the four delegate positions and whether the Indigenous Office had been contacted regarding potential candidates. The President confirmed that the job link had been shared with students to encourage applications.

### 5.2 Vice President, Student Life

- At OTSU-fest, there was strong student engagement, with 2,400 students completing a survey. The use of OTSU influencers aims to further boost involvement. The clubs and societies ratification process saw many applications, with fairness prioritized and numerous applications rejected while offering alternative options due to limited spots. A rubric system and procedural updates were discussed, along with challenges in contacting club presidents. A training program for Society Presidents is planned for October 3rd in collaboration with the university's risk management department. Many applications were received for Women in Clubs, with ongoing discussions involving faculty and the CSC. The program survey has been finalized. Fundraising efforts during athletic games are underway with the C&M team focusing on engaging visuals. The website for the initiative is live and will continue to be developed. Collaboration with the Executive team is ongoing, including hiring for student positions, and full committee meetings have been held to move initiatives forward.

- Committee updates were discussed during the meeting and are included in the executive report.

DISCUSSION

- The board sought clarification on the ratification process for women's clubs. The VP of Student Life explained that there are seven clubs, one per faculty, with Education being difficult to fill due to the program's structure. When asked about who would contact societies for training, the VP stated she is overseeing the training while Tristann manages logistics. The Financial Controller offered assistance with financial training, having conducted it last year. The VP Downtown mentioned the possibility of a Downtown Women's Club if there is no interest in the Education faculty. Regarding the graduate society, the VP of Student Life reported ongoing efforts to secure ratification but noted difficulties in gathering information and communication challenges, with Education and Graduate positions currently vacant and potential by-elections being considered. The President has followed up with all society presidents, and significant campaigning has taken place. The Executive Director provided an update on the total number of nominations to be filled.

### 5.3 Vice President, Student Affairs

- Over the past two weeks, efforts focused on onboarding and transition, including familiarization with bylaws and policies. There was active engagement in connecting with students. A proposal was developed for content creation related to the DRT, aiming to advocate for transit and amplify student voices. Previous initiatives by the former VP of Student Affairs were reviewed. Collaboration with the President and VP of Student Life took place to fill student roles. Committee updates were also discussed during the meeting and are detailed in the executive report.

DISCUSSION

- The board shared concerns about the DRT, with members recounting experiences of missing buses and asking if any surveys or research had been done on student ridership and bus capacity during peak times. The VP of Student Affairs reported conducting research focused on Conlin Road, identifying peak times between 4:30 pm and 6:30 pm, but noted limited frequency information available on the DRT website. He suggested reaching out to DRT for collaboration and involving students by collecting their testimonials for content creation. The Board Chair added that sometimes buses pass by empty without stopping for waiting passengers. When asked which initiatives are realistic to pursue, the VP mentioned planning a Pow Wow event around February or March in collaboration with Indigenous students but noted that other initiatives may require longer timelines to implement.

### 5.4 Vice President, Downtown

- At the Downtown campus, activities included a scavenger hunt, speeches, and tabling, which generated many student questions. Signage was set up to support the campus presence. Advocacy efforts focused on a survey to push for the reinstatement of parking passes, temporarily removed due to full parking lots. A new vending machine was added to provide more options for students. The Downtown Kit lounge space was enhanced with commercial-grade furniture, including a university-donated couch and contributions from the society. Event planning is underway for a gala, with the event name to be decided later through student polls.

- Committee updates were discussed during the meeting and are included in the executive report.

DISCUSSION

- The board asked if the strike had impacted the Downtown campus. The VP of Downtown responded that there has been no immediate effect on Downtown unless students travel to the North campus. She noted that the discontinued Connect Downtown campus bus could affect accessibility but stated it is not a priority this year. There has been no picketing at Downtown, and more information will be provided to the board regarding the strike.

RESOLUTION

Moved by S. Mostafi (Vice-Chair) and seconded by K. Howells. Motion carried.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve the executive reports as presented.

## 6. OPERATIONAL REPORT

*The update below is provided by the Executive Director. The full report is included in the meeting material.*

- The OTSU Fest was successful, with abundant merchandise distributed and strong visibility across campus. Craigton and Maryam attended several events to assist. Executives, led by the Presidents, did an outstanding job, with the first event being a karaoke night. Appreciation was extended to all staff, executives, and volunteers for their efforts. Challenges arose due to the strike, with staff working from home for part of the week, though schedules have since returned to normal with flexibility maintained. The team is also managing backlash from students unhappy with ratification decisions, which has resulted in rude behavior toward CSR staff; the university is aware and exploring ways to hold students accountable under the student conduct policy. Since launching the event form seven business days ago, 57 submissions have been received. Despite challenges, efforts continue to facilitate numerous on-campus opportunities for students.

DISCUSSION

- The Financial Controller emphasized the need for patience as the Rubric system is new and acknowledged ongoing efforts to address student complaints. When the board asked if a formal statement was needed, the Executive Director responded that it was unnecessary but assured that communication will be maintained via email. Regarding adaptation to Rubric, the Financial Controller noted that while there is a learning curve, the next steps become easier once students sign up. The Executive Director highlighted the goal of empowering students to take greater ownership of their clubs. When asked about the estimated total cost for O-Week, the Executive Director confirmed that it is reflected in the financial statement and more details will be shared during Mayooran's presentation.

RESOLUTION

No resolution required.

## AGENDA TOPICS

### 7. FINANCIAL UPDATE

*The item below is presented by* Financial Controller *The full report is included in the meeting material.*

- Three financial statements will be presented each semester, including an income statement showing total expenses and revenues by department. The current presentation covers four months. Revenue figures are not fully up-to-date, relying on last year's numbers, with updated data expected by the end of October from the university. Certain items, such as student legal aid and OUSA membership fees, are not considered revenue for the organization as they are passed directly to third parties. Similarly, revenues from MyVirtualDoctor and student plans reflect true numbers but are also passed on. Interest income is generated by placing funds from the university into a high-interest savings account. Expenses were reviewed in detail, with explanations provided for each line item.

DISCUSSION

- The board questioned the impact of bank interest rates, with the Financial Controller explaining that if rates decrease, earnings from savings accounts would slightly decline. The Board Chair inquired about whether any interest charges are applied to students or if a portion of expenses is taken. The Financial Controller clarified that reserve funds pertain only to health and dental insurance, with no fee increases in the last three years and premiums are actually decreasing. The board asked if having more students led to increased claims, and about the frequency of employee health tax payments, to which the Financial Controller responded that a new line will be created to track this. When asked about director insurance, the Financial Controller explained it is for liability purposes. Regarding revenue from sponsorships, the Executive Director stated there has been none so far.

RESOLUTION

Moved by I. Khurram and seconded by C. Corda. Motion carried.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve the financial update presented by the Financial Controller.

No Vote: In favour - 0 I Opposed - 0 I Abstained - 0

### 8. AGM & TOWN HALL PREPARATIONS

*The item below is presented by* Executive Director *The full report is included in the meeting material.*

**AGM**

- The largest lecture hall has been booked, with a recommendation for the event to be in-person only. Last year's hybrid format faced logistical challenges, particularly with verification, leading to difficulties. It is expected that meeting quorum won't be an issue. Although the Executive Decision was made to hold a hybrid event last year, the format was ultimately unsuccessful.

*The item below is presented by* Executive Director *The full report is included in the meeting material.*

TOWN HALL PREPARATIONS

- The Executive Director presented the proposal to hold town halls in a hybrid format due to limited in-person space, emphasizing that town halls don't require voting or the same safeguards as the AGM.

DISCUSSION

- The board raised concerns about accessibility for the AGM. The Executive Director confirmed that proxy forms will be available, following practices used by other organizations. The VP of Downtown, shared that downtown students expressed reluctance to attend in person, citing low participation and the need to ensure their voices are heard. The board inquired about how students can access the AGM and emphasized protecting votes and the meeting's integrity. Accessibility support from SAS was suggested to facilitate participation and identify what items could be voted on. The Executive Director noted that the agenda must be posted 10 days in advance, and information will be made available, including town hall meetings for downtown students. The board discussed attempting a hybrid setup for the AGM and suggested providing free parking or shuttle services, which the Executive Director confirmed would be arranged.

RESOLUTION

**MOTION 1:**

Moved by C. Corda and seconded by S. Maljuf Suárez. Motion carried.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve that the Annual General Meeting for year 2025 will be held in-person.

Vote: In favour - 7 | Opposed - 0 | Abstained - 0

**MOTION 2:**

Moved by C. Corda and seconded by K. Howells. Motion carried.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve to provide options to make it accessible for students.

Vote: In favour - 7 | Opposed - 0 | Abstained - 0

## 9. BYLAW REVISION RECOMMENDATIONS

*The item below is presented by* Guest: Titus Gregory *The full report is included in the meeting material.*

- Titus Gregory provided counsel on proposed revisions to the OTSU articles and bylaws, focusing mainly on aligning the bylaws with current election practices, which differ from the original bylaws' expectation of in-person or electronic single-meeting elections. Key changes address discrepancies such as faculty representatives and the VP Downtown elections, which are currently handled by specific student groups but not reflected in the bylaws. The revisions also ensure compliance with the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act regarding director removal procedures. Additional suggestions include introducing a secondary quorum for essential business to address high quorum requirements and potentially reducing notice periods for board meetings. Titus invited feedback on these recommendations and confirmed that a detailed rationale was previously shared with the board chair and executive director.

DISCUSSION

- The board raised concerns about discrepancies in the document and asked if similar issues exist in other student unions. The paralegal responded that while discrepancies between practices and bylaws are common, OTSU's discrepancies are more significant due to the assumption that elections occur at AGMs or SGMs, which limits democratic participation. The board agreed that specific sections of the recommendations should be reviewed and finalized within two to three days. Once a motion is put forward, the finalized bylaw recommendations will be submitted to the paralegal.

RESOLUTION

Moved by C. Corda and seconded by K. Howells. Motion carried.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors tables the Bylaw revisions recommendation until further discussion.

Vote: In favour - 7 | Opposed - 0 | Abstained - 0

## 10. C & S COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

*The item below is presented by* VP Student Life *The full report is included in the meeting material.*

- The CSC proposes consolidating the current 13 "women in" clubs into seven faculty-based clubs for the 2025-2026 academic year to ensure equitable representation and streamline the ratification process. This restructuring aims to provide each faculty with a dedicated women's club, reducing overlapping mandates and promoting clarity, resource sustainability, and unified advocacy. The proposal acknowledges the valuable contributions of existing clubs while seeking to create a fairer, more efficient, and sustainable framework. The Board is urged to approve this recommendation, with flexibility for future adjustments as the OTSU's ratification system develops.

DISCUSSION

No Discussion

Moved by C. Corda and seconded by S. Mostafi (Vice-Chair). Motion carried.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve C&S Committee recommendation as presented.

Vote: In favour - 4 | Opposed - | Abstained - 2

## 11. STUDENT AT LARGE APPOINTMENTS (POLICY COMMITTEE & DCAC)

*The item below is presented by* VP Downtown *The full report is included in the meeting material.*

- The VP of Downtown has conducted extensive recruitment and would like to present nine Student-at-Large recommendations to the board, representing individuals from various programs at the Downtown campus.

DISCUSSION

- The board engaged in several discussions about the proposed individuals, with some members taking extra time to review the candidates.

RESOLUTION

**Motion 1: All Candidates**

Moved by S. Mostafi (Vice-Chair) and seconded by S. Maljuf Suárez. Motion carried.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve that the following students: Adam Milne, Nikeshia Allen, Arkyn Kornell, Branice Yeung, Maria Cashore, Hannah Orhue, Aisha Chowdry, and Hanna Ebrahimi are appointed as Student-At-Large committee members of the Downtown Campus Advisory Committee.

Vote: In favour - 4 I Opposed - 0 I Abstained - 2

**Motion 2: Gabrielle Dymock**

Moved by C. Corda and seconded by S. Mostafi (Vice-Chair). Motion carried.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors tables the appointment of Gabrielle Dymock.

Vote: In favour - 4 I Opposed - 0 I Abstained - 1

Keenan Howells has declared conflict of interest. Not eligible to vote.

## 12. NUTRITION ACCESS PROGRAM ANCILLARY FEE

*The item below is presented by* VP Student Life *The full report was distributed in-person during the presentation.*

- The Ontario Tech Student Union (OTSU) has developed the Nutrition Access Program (NAP), a three-year initiative designed to address food insecurity on campus while fostering student wellness, academic success, equity, and dignity. Applicable to full-time students
- Food insecurity is a growing challenge in Canadian post-secondary institutions and has a direct effect on academic performance, mental health, and retention. The NAP seeks to provide sustainable, student-centred, and stigma-free food access programs, including Snack & Go (weekly grab-and-go), The Breakfast Table (monthly breakfast table), Future scalable support (gift cards, food hampers, partnerships with local providers, and referral systems).
- While we have allotted $2500 from the OTSU Wellness Budget for Year 1 of NAP, long-term sustainability requires a dedicated, reliable funding stream. Establishing an ancillary fee will ensure stable funding for program continuity and growth beyond the pilot phase.

DISCUSSION

- The board questioned the rationale behind setting the fee at $25 instead of a lower amount like $20 to allocate more funds directly to students. The VP, Student Life, explained that $25 aligns with fees set by other student unions. The board requested a detailed breakdown of how the remaining $30,000 would be structured. The VP clarified that this money would apply next year and not be spent during her term. When asked if the fee accounts for inflation, the Financial Controller suggested increasing the ancillary fee from $2.50 to $5 annually to better reflect program costs, noting that spending 50 cents per dollar indicates a 50% overhead. Questions were raised about students' ability to opt out, whether the fee increases with inflation, the duration of similar programs at George Brown, and their success rates. The Financial Controller confirmed opt-out is possible, and the VP shared that George Brown has had similar initiatives for a long time, offering various packages. The board emphasized the need for data to justify the program and acknowledged the good work done on the proposal. The President noted that the initiative is currently only seeking approval, with a detailed breakdown of the remaining $30,000 to follow.

RESOLUTION

Moved by S. Mostafi (Vice-Chair) and seconded by C. Corda. Motion carried.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve the proposal of the NAP programs with amendments to be done as directed.

Vote: In favour - 3 I Opposed - 0 I Abstained - 1

Ifra and Keenan Howells have left the meeting during this agenda item and are currently unavailable to vote.

## 13. NEW BUSINESS

DISCUSSION

No Discussion

RESOLUTION

No resolution required.

## 14. IN-CAMERA

Moved *in-camera* at 9:26 p.m. Moved by C. Corda and seconded by S. Mostafi (Vice-Chair). Motion carried.

*In-camera meeting minutes stored separately. HR Generalist & CRO and Executive Director have a copy of in-camera meeting minutes.*

Moved *out-of-camera* at 10:07 p.m. Moved by S. Mostafi (Vice-Chair) and seconded by S. Maljuf Suárez. Motion carried.

## 15. ANNOUNCEMENTS

*No announcements at this time.* No discussion.

## 16. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 10:07 p.m. Moved by S. Mostafi (Vice-Chair) and seconded by C. Corda. Motion carried.