ONTARIO TECH STUDENT UNION

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

GROUP	Ontario Tech Student Union (OTSU)
LOCATION	Virtual (Google Meet) / In-person (SHA 020/021)
DATE & TIME	May 19, 2026 , 5:42p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
NOTE TAKER	Katie Lapp
ATTENDEES	**Directors (in-person):** Faculty of Social Science & Humanities & Chair, Keenan Howells; Faculty of Science & Vice-Chair, Alya Rasoul; Faculty of Education, Victoria Byrne; Graduate Studies, Nikkita Singh **Directors (online):** Faculty of Business and Information Technology, Arjun Ariaran and Faculty of Health Science, Ifra Khurram **Executives (in-person):** President & Kailey Haskell; VP Downtown, Ryan Stoddart; VP Student Life, Shariq Abdul-Wahid; VP Student Affairs, Anwoy Barua **Executives (online):** N/A **Staff:** Financial Controller, Mayooran Thurairajah and Administrative & Governance Coordinator / Chief Returning Officer, Katie Lapp **Guests:** Alan Griffiths
REGRETS	Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science (Vacant)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called into order at 5:42 p.m. Moved by K. Howells and seconded by A. Rasoul. Motion carried.

2. TERRITORIAL RECOGNITION

3. AGENDA APPROVAL

DISCUSSION

No discussion.

RESOLUTION

Moved by K. Howells and seconded by A. Rasoul. Motion carried.

In favour - 6 | Opposed - 0 | Abstained - 0

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve approves the agenda items for May 19, 2026.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

The update below is provided by *Guest (A.Griffiths)*.

DISCUSSION

No discussion.

RESOLUTION

Moved by K. Howells and seconded by A. Rasoul. Motion carried.

In favour - 6 | Opposed - 0 | Abstained - 0

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve the meeting minutes for April 23, 2026.

5. RATIFICATION OF BOARD MEMBERS

The update below is provided by *Guest (A.Griffiths)*.

- The Administrative/Governance Coordinator and Chief Returning Officer confirmed that three board members have been hired since the ratification of the general election results and that their appointments have not yet been approved by the Board. These members are Victoria Byrne from the Faculty of Education, Nikkita Singh from Graduate Studies and Arjun Ariaran from the Faculty of Business and Information Technology.

DISCUSSION

1) **Faculty of Education (Victoria Byrne):** Currently enrolled in the Communications and Digital Media program and is expected to graduate in June 2026. Beginning in September 2026, they will pursue studies in Education. Victoria expressed enthusiasm about representing and supporting students while serving as an active member of the Board of Directors.

   Motion #1: To approve Victoria Byrne as a Board Director representing the Faculty of Education for the 2026-2027 term.

Moved by K. Howells and seconded by A. Rasoul. Motion carried.

In favour - 4 | Opposed - 0 | Abstained - 0

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve Victoria Byrne as a Board Director representing the Faculty of Education for the 2026-2027 term.

2) **Graduate Studies (Nikkita Singh):** Currently enrolled in the Engineering Management program as a third-year student, they expressed enthusiasm about representing the interests of graduate students and collaborating with fellow members of the Board of Directors throughout the upcoming year.

   Motion #2: To approve Nikkita Singh as a Board Director representing Graduate Studies for the 2026-2027 term.

Moved by K. Howells and seconded by V. Byrne. Motion carried.

In favour - 4 | Opposed - 0 | Abstained - 0

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve Nikkita Singh as a Board Director representing Graduate Studies for the 2026-2027 term.

3) **Faculty of Business and Information Technology (Arjun Ariaran):** Currently enrolled in the Finance program as a second-year student. They hope to bring positive change to the university through progressive leadership.

Motion #3: To approve Arjun Ariaran as a Board Director representing the Faculty of Business and Information Technology for the 2026–2027 term.

Moved by V. Byrne and seconded by N. Singh. Motion carried.

In favour - 4 | Opposed - 0 | Abstained - 0

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve Arjun Ariaran as a Board Director representing the Faculty of Business and Information Technology for the 2026–2027 term.

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve the ratification of board members.

6. BOARD CHAIR APPOINTMENT

The update below is provided by K. Howells (Chair).

- Guest, Alan Griffiths, seeked clarification from the Board Members if anyone was interested in taking on the role of Board Chair for the 2026-2027 term. The Board, Faculty of Social Science & Humanities (Keenan Howells), expressed interest in this position.

DISCUSSION

- The Board, Faculty of Social Science & Humanities, is a returning board member for this term and expressed the importance of having a downtown student as either the Chair or Vice-Chair in the yearly leadership rotation. The Board, Faculty of Science, seeked clarification if the board chair was going to be decided at this meeting. Guest, Alan Griffiths, confirmed this would be the case.
- The Board, Faculty of Business and Information Technology, sought clarification if there was an additional honorarium associated with being appointed Chair or Vice-Chair. The President confirmed that no additional honorarium is provided for either role, as doing so would not be considered appropriate or ethical.

RESOLUTION

Motion #4: To approve Keenan Howells as Chair for the 2026–2027 term.

Moved by V. Byrne and seconded by A. Rasoul. Motion carried.

In favour - 5 | Opposed - 0 | Abstained - 0

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve the Board Chair appointment.

7. BOARD VICE-CHAIR APPOINTMENT

The update below is provided by K. Howells (Chair).

- The Board, Faculty of Social Science & Humanities & Chair, seeked clarification from the Board Members if anyone was interested in taking on the role of Board Vice-Chair for the 2026-2027 term. The Board, Faculty of Science (Alya Rasoul) and Graduate Studies (Nikkita Singh) expressed interest in the position.
- Guest, Alan Griffiths, proposed that both candidates briefly outline their qualifications for the position and then leave the room temporarily to allow the board to discuss their candidacies.

DISCUSSION

- Alya stated that serving as Vice-Chair would support their goal of developing leadership and advocacy skills while continuing to represent student needs. They noted experience serving on various boards and committees, including an advisory role, and emphasized their understanding of student representation.

- Nikkita stated that serving as Vice-Chair would further develop their leadership skills and gain experience with committee processes. They highlighted four years of project management experience, previous service as a student club vice president, and a strong ability to collaborate effectively with others.

RESOLUTION

Motion #5: To approve Alya Rasoul as Vice-Chair for the 2026–2027 term.

Moved by V. Byrne and seconded by I. Khurram. Motion carried.

In favour - 4 | Opposed - 0 | Abstained - 1

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve the Board Vice-Chair appointment.

8. EXECUTIVE REPORTS

See the full executive reports on the OTSU website.

8.1 President

- Since the beginning of the 2026–2027 term, the President and executive team have focused on onboarding, transition activities, and strategic planning for the upcoming academic year. Introductory meetings were held with internal teams and university administration to establish relationships, discuss priorities, and begin coordinating regular communication opportunities with senior university leadership. The executive team has also participated in onboarding and training sessions, while beginning research and outreach related to their individual project initiatives. Operationally, efforts have been directed toward supporting staff and organizational readiness, including coordinating executive and board training opportunities, facilitating Mental Health First Aid and CPR training initiatives, and assisting with staffing and hiring processes for upcoming positions. Additional administrative work included resetting executive technology access, reassigning office resources, reviewing operational expenses, and supporting day-to-day organizational matters.The President also coordinated a staff welcome brunch to foster relationship-building among full-time staff, part-time staff, and executives at the start of the term. Externally, participation has begun in introductory meetings and planning activities with the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA), including preparations for the upcoming CASA Foundations Conference, which will support advocacy development, committee participation, and national networking opportunities for the Ontario Tech Student Union.

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

DISCUSSION

No discussion.

8.2 Vice President, Downtown

- During the first two weeks of the term, efforts focused on onboarding, strategic planning, and familiarization with the Ontario Tech Student Union's operations and governance structure. This included connecting with department leaders and staff, participating in accessibility and supervisor training, reviewing bylaws and policies, and establishing goals and workflows with the 2026–2027 executive team. Additional review and assessment of downtown-specific resources were conducted to ensure materials accurately reflect the current needs of the downtown student community. Significant time was also dedicated to internal and external relationship building through meetings with the C&M team and executive advisory teams. These discussions provided insight into organizational processes, current operational priorities, and strategic objectives for the upcoming year. Outreach was initiated with the university's sustainability department to explore opportunities for collaboration on sustainable initiatives, while efforts also began to establish relationships with key faculty and downtown community stakeholders. Operational and student leadership support initiatives were also advanced during this period. Coordination efforts began for Standard First Aid and CPR certification training for staff and executives to support organizational preparedness and leadership development. In addition, support was provided alongside the VP Student Life and the President of the Humanities Society during the executive candidate interview and selection process to assist with the team's structure.

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

DISCUSSION

- The Chair inquired whether Standard First Aid and CPR training would support the organization's risk management processes. The VP Downtown confirmed that this training would significantly strengthen compliance with the university's risk management guidelines. The Financial Controller informed all the Board Members they are welcome to join the training also.

8.3 Vice President, Student Life

- Work during this reporting period focused on organizational development, project planning, and student engagement initiatives. The hiring process for the Clubs and Society Committee was initiated through the posting of the position and commencement of candidate recruitment efforts. Planning and development also began for several key projects and initiatives, including career development programming, the Downtown Campus Crawl initiative, expanded student discount opportunities, and wellness-focused facility improvements such as the implementation of bidets on campus.Additional efforts were directed toward supporting executive, Communications and Marketing, and Events training to ensure staff and leadership teams are prepared for the upcoming term. Support was also provided for student governance and leadership development through participation in Ontario Tech Humanities Society (OTHS) interviews alongside the society's president. Work is also underway to revive the Faculty of Education Society through administrative and organizational redevelopment efforts, including preparing recruitment materials and locating historical governance documents.

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

DISCUSSION

- Guest Alan Griffiths inquired about the existence of an active Education Society. The VP Student Life confirmed that there is currently no active Education Society and that no associated fee exists.

8.4 Vice President, Student Affairs

- The beginning of the 2026–2027 term focused on onboarding and reboarding activities for the executive team, including HR training, team building activities, and introductory sessions with incoming Vice Presidents. Time was also dedicated to reviewing existing bylaws and identifying opportunities for governance and policy improvements moving forward.Throughout May, structured goal-setting and strategic planning sessions were conducted to establish priorities for the upcoming term. This included collaboration with the Communications and Marketing team and participation in a strategic planning session with OUSA on May 18. Key areas of focus included exploring advocacy initiatives related to student housing and identifying improved methods for students to communicate with executives in an accessible and supportive manner.The OUSA Retreat, held during the week of May 11, brought together student union representatives from across the sector to discuss advocacy priorities, participate in board training, and support early policy planning for the coming year. The retreat also provided opportunities to strengthen relationships with peer student unions and discuss strategies for fostering stronger engagement and connections with students across member institutions.

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

DISCUSSION

No discussion.

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

DISCUSSION

No discussion.

8.4 Vice President, Downtown

- During the first two weeks of the term, efforts focused on onboarding, strategic planning, and familiarization with the Ontario Tech Student Union's operations and governance structure. This included connecting with department leaders and staff, participating in accessibility and supervisor training, reviewing bylaws and policies, and establishing goals and workflows with the 2026–2027 executive team. Additional review and assessment of downtown-specific resources were conducted to ensure materials accurately reflect the current needs of the downtown student community. Significant time was also dedicated to internal and external relationship building through meetings with the C&M team and executive advisory teams. These discussions provided insight into organizational processes, current operational priorities, and strategic objectives for the upcoming year. Outreach was initiated with the university's sustainability department to explore opportunities for collaboration on sustainable initiatives, while efforts also began to establish relationships with key faculty and downtown community stakeholders. Operational and student leadership support initiatives were also advanced during this period. Coordination efforts began for Standard First Aid and CPR certification training for staff and executives to support organizational preparedness and leadership development. In addition, support was provided alongside the VP Student Life and the President of the Humanities Society during the executive candidate interview and selection process to assist with the team's structure.

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

DISCUSSION

No discussion.

RESOLUTION

Moved by A. Rasoul and seconded by N. Singh. Motion carried.

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

9. PRESIDENTIAL EXPENSES

The update below is provided by *the* *President* .

- The President proposed the pre-approval of anticipated expenses related to a conference and operational needs prior to the next board meeting. It was noted that the request was submitted in advance due to timing constraints, with expenses to be incurred before formal review at the next meeting. Estimated costs included travel-related expenses, accommodation, and minor operational expenditures, with figures intentionally overestimated to account for variability. A full expense report with receipts and final amounts will be submitted for formal review and reimbursement following the event. The total estimated expenses for May 2026 amounted to $3,272.24. The Financial Controller confirmed this is the correct process. The Financial Controller confirmed the OTSU sets aside $7,500 yearly for presidential initiatives, which this would not fall under. This proposal would fall under committees and meetings which have a yearly budget of $20,000.

DISCUSSION

No discussion.

RESOLUTION

Motion #5: To approve the estimated presidential expenses for May 2026 amounted to $3,272.24.

Moved by A. Rasoul and seconded by V. Byrne. Motion carried.

In favour - 5 I Opposed - 0 I Abstained - 0

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve the estimated presidential expenses for May 2026 amounted to $3,272.24.

10. OPERATIONAL REPORTS

The update below is provided by *the* *President* .

- The President provided a high-level operational update, noting that the new executive team began on May 1 and is currently undergoing onboarding and training. It was also reported that additional returning and part-time staff joined this month and are in training. Hiring is in progress for the Clubs and Societies Coordinator positions, with completion expected by the end of the week. Upcoming agenda items include discussions on the Interim General Manager and Human Resources roles.

- The Financial Controller provided an update noting a departmental vacancy from February 12 to March 22, which contributed to delays in financial processing. It was reported that Finance operations have since resumed, although some backlog remains due to increased April transaction volumes and strengthened internal approvals. The department is actively addressing outstanding reimbursements, while anticipating continued high activity related to year end close procedures, preparation for the external audit scheduled for June to early July, and the transition into the new financial year beginning May 1, 2026. They also outlined the upcoming budget process, including the establishment of a Finance Committee to review the draft budget prior to Board approval, and noted that the organization remains in a strong financial position with significant reserves, investment income, and ownership of its building assets.

- The President noted that the remaining operational updates had been provided to the Board of Directors in advance through the board package. To allow for efficient use of meeting time, the Board agreed to proceed without further discussion of those updates.

DISCUSSION

No discussion.

RESOLUTION

Motion #6: To approve the operational reports as presented.

Moved by A. Rasoul and seconded by I. Khurram. Motion carried.

In favour - 5 I Opposed - 0 I Abstained - 0

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

11. OTSU COMMITTEE BOARD MEMBER APPOINTMENTS

The update below is provided by the K. Howells (Chair).

- The OTSU Board of Directors approve the following membership appointments to the following committees:

1. **Awards Selections Committee:**
   - Board Member 1: Nikkita Singh
   - Board Member 2: Victoria Byrne

   Motion #7: To approve Nikkita Singh and Victoria Byrne as members of the Awards Selections Committee.

   Moved by A. Rasoul and seconded by A. Ariaran. Motion carried.

   In favour - 6 I Opposed - 0 I Abstained - 0

2. **Clubs and Societies Committee:**
   - Board Member 1: Victoria Byrne
   - Board Member 2: Keenan Howells

   Motion #8: To approve Victoria Byrne and Keenan Howells as members of the Clubs and Societies Committee.

   Moved by N. Singh and seconded by I. Khurram. Motion carried.

   In favour - 6 I Opposed - 0 I Abstained - 0

3. **Downtown Campus Advisory Committee:**
   - Board Member 1: Keenan Howells

   Motion #9: To approve Keenan Howells as the member of the Downtown Campus Advisory Committee.

   Moved by V. Byrne and seconded by A. Rasoul. Motion carried.

   In favour - 6 I Opposed - 0 I Abstained - 0

4. **Elections Committee:**
   - Board Member 1: Arjun Ariaran
   - Board Member 2: Keenan Howells

   Motion #10: To approve Arjun Ariaran and Keenan Howells as members of the Elections Committee.

   Moved by N. Singh and seconded by I. Khurram. Motion carried.

   In favour - 6 I Opposed - 0 I Abstained - 0

5. **Finance Committee:**
    - Board Member 1: Arjun Ariaran
    - Board Member 2: Nikkita Singh

    Motion #11: To approve Arjun Ariaran and Nikkita Singh as members of the Finance Committee.

    Moved by V. Byrne and seconded by I. Khurram. Motion carried.

    In favour - 6 | Opposed - 0 | Abstained - 0

6. **Student Advocacy & Advisory Committee:**
    - Board Member 1: Alya Rasoul
    - Board Member 2: Ifra Khurram

    Motion #12: To approve Alya Rasoul and Ifra Khurram as members of the Student Advocacy & Advisory Committee.

    Moved by N. Singh and seconded by A. Ariaran. Motion carried.

    In favour - 6 | Opposed - 0 | Abstained - 0

7. **Policy Committee:**
    - Board Member 1: Alya Rasoul
    - Board Member 2: Nikkita Singh

    Motion #13: To approve Alya Rasoul and Nikkita Singh as members of the Policy Committee.

    Moved by N. Singh and seconded by A. Ariaran. Motion carried.

    In favour - 6 | Opposed - 0 | Abstained - 0

8. **Human Resources Committee:**
    - Board Member 1: Ifra Khurram
    - Board Member 2: Victoria Byrne

    Motion #14: To approve Ifra Khurram and Victoria Byrne as members of the Human Resources Committee.

    Moved by N. Singh and seconded by A. Rasoul. Motion carried.

    In favour - 6 | Opposed - 0 | Abstained - 0

9. **Additional:**

    Motion #15: If there is an Ontario Tech/Ontario Tech Student Union Advisory Committee brought forward, Alya Rasoul will be the board member who will be the representative.

    Moved by N. Singh and seconded by V. Byrne. Motion carried.

    In favour - 6 | Opposed - 0 | Abstained - 0

DISCUSSION

No discussion.

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve the OTSU committee board member appointments.

12. BOARD & EXECUTIVE 2026-2027 GOALS

The update below is provided by *the* *Guest (A.Griffiths)*.

- Guest, Alan Griffiths, noted that the Board and Executive Members had established several goals, success pillars, and implementation strategies earlier that day. He recommended that the matter be deferred to the next Board meeting for further discussion regarding implementation. He also recommended that the Chair and President work together to develop an appropriate framework and structure moving forward.

DISCUSSION

No discussion.

RESOLUTION

Motion #16: To table the 2026/2027 goal document and gain approval at a later date from the Board of Directors.

Moved by V. Byrne and seconded by A. Rasoul. Motion carried.

In favour - 6 I Opposed - 0 I Abstained - 0

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors tables the 2026/2027 goal document and will gain approval at a later date from the Board of Directors.

13. BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE JUNE - AUGUST 2026

The update below is provided by *the* *K. Howells (Chair)*.

- The Board of Directors and Executive Team agreed on the following in-person Board Meeting schedule for June, July and August 2026:

1. Wednesday, June 15 from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
2. Monday, July 20 from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
3. Monday, August 17 from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

DISCUSSION

No discussion.

RESOLUTION

Motion #17: to approve the board meeting schedule for June - August 2026.

Moved by N. Singh and seconded by V. Byrne. Motion carried.

In favour - 5 I Opposed - 0 I Abstained - 0

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve the board meeting schedule for June - August 2026.

14. BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBER HONOURARIUMS

The update below is provided by *the* *President*.

- The President brought forward a proposal to increase the amount of honorariums for meetings attended by the Board of Directors to $110.00 for in-person and $70.00 for online attendance, and for any mandatory training, $180.00 for in-person and $100.00 for online attendance. Currently, the honorarium rates are set at $50.00 for in-person and $35.00 for online board meetings.

DISCUSSION

- The Chair expressed concern about how students may perceive the proposed increase and its impact on the upcoming calendar year.
- The VP Downtown noted that the increase could create division among students and emphasized the importance of communicating that the increase would not come from mandatory student fees if approved.
- The President proposed tabling the discussion until the June Board Meeting.
- Guest, Alan Griffiths, supported tabling the discussion and recommended referring the proposal to the Finance Committee for review as part of the budget development process.
- The Board, Faculty of Business and Information Technology, suggested proceeding with a vote on the proposal as presented.

RESOLUTION

Motion #18: To approve the Board of Directors honorarium proposal as presented.

Moved by A. Ariaran and seconded by A. Rasoul.

- The Chair recommended tabling the motion and referring it to the Finance Committee for a thorough review, noting this would demonstrate that the Board of Directors had exercised due diligence.
- The Board, Faculty of Education, supported tabling the motion and suggested assessing the performance of the new Board members before considering an increase to the honorarium.
- The Board, Faculty of Science & Vice-Chair, shared feedback from students indicating that many would prefer a paid position over a volunteer role. They noted that, since the motion was brought forward by the President, students would likely be receptive to the proposal and expressed support for proceeding with the vote.
- The Board, Graduate Studies, stated that an increase could be justified if the Board of Directors demonstrated strong performance and asked why the Finance Committee would be the appropriate body to review the proposal.
- The Chair explained that referral to the Finance Committee would provide a professional and thorough review process and allow the rationale to be clearly communicated to the student body.

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

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the OTSU Board of Directors approve the board and committee member honorariums.

Moved by V. Byrne and seconded by A. Rasoul. Motion carried.

15. IN CAMERA

Moved *in-camera* at 7:43 p.m. Moved by V. Byrne and seconded by I. Khurram. Motion carried.

In-camera meeting minutes stored separately. CRO and have a copy of in-camera meeting minutes.

Moved *out-of-camera* at 8:30 p.m. Moved by S. Mostafi (Vice-Chair) and seconded by V. Bryne. Motion carried.

16. NEW BUSINESS

The following announcement is from the K. Howells (Chair).

DISCUSSION

No discussion.

RESOLUTION

No resolution required.

17. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcement is from the K. Howells (Chair).

DISCUSSION

No discussion.

RESOLUTION

No resolution required.

18. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.