

# MINUTES | Rhodes University SRC General Meeting

DATE: 04 February 2019  
TIME: 18h30 – 22h00  
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**

- Purple Thursday & TV Journalism Students' Profile on SRC President
- Sponsorships
- Nkoli-Fassie
- RedBull
- Parking

## **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF 28 JANUARY 2019**

- Secretary General apologized for the unavailability of the aforementioned minutes on account of the time-constraints in preparing them
- Residence Councilor expressed disappointment with respect to the absence of the minutes, and further expressed concern as to the absence of a printed hard-copy of the agenda for the present meeting
- COUNCIL RESOLVED TO CONFIRM THE AFOREMENTIONED MINUTES IN THE NEXT GENERAL MEETING

## **HONORARIUM**

- Secretary General noted that the first draft of the Honorarium Document was discussed in the previous meeting at which he agreed to produce a corrected and edited version; noted that Mr. Ofei had made additional recommendations

as to the content of the Document, and further required a greater degree of specificity

- Secretary General further apologized for not being able to produce this updated version of the Honorarium document as he had little time to prepare it
- Oppidan Councilor noted that the Secretary General had not taken seriously a previous directive from Council for him to focus on the work which he needs to do for the Council in his capacity as Secretary General, and not to do the work of the Student Benefits Councilor; she noted that the Secretary General needs to be more on top of his game
- Residence Councilor noted that – in light of the absence of the Document upon which the present agenda item is premised – it would be futile for Council to deliberate on this agenda item any further, and thus requested that the Council proceed with other matters
- Mr. Ofei noted that the Secretary General’s excuses were unacceptable and that he was given clear instructions from Council to pay more attention to his portfolio
- Mr. Ofei gave recommendations with respect to the Honorarium Document, noting that it should contain provisions relating to punctuality; the declaration of a compulsory event by Council and what that means in terms of the obligations placed on Council and penalties relating thereto; as well as provisions for extraordinary/special/emergency occasions
- President reiterated the need to institute a penal code to enforce punctuality
- Vice-President requested Councilors to start presenting suggestions for such a penal code and deduction percentages
- Environmental Councilor asked Mr. Ofei what his opinions are regarding suitable penalties
- Mr. Ofei noted that there are a variety of things to consider
  - o As regards absenteeism
    - Absenteeism with a valid apology would incur no penalty
    - Absenteeism with a late apology would incur a relatively low penalty (the operative word here being “relatively”) – and that the definition of lateness be predicated on that to which the Council is agreeable

- Vice President noted the need for proportionality to be taken into account when deciding penalties; he expressed the view that penalties that are too high would effectively invalidate all the prior work a Councilor would have done prior to having committed the infraction for which the penalty materializes
- Mr. Ofei noted that the Vice-President, having been on Council before, is aware of the precedence set by previous Council's in which large portions of Councilors' honoraria were deducted owing to major infractions; he noted that there is a precedence of severe punishment, which serve as a deterrence against undesirable behaviour on the part of Councilors
- Mr. Ofei noted that the Council does not earn a *salary*; the amount of money which they receive is an Honorarium (the University's way of showing gratitude for their service as student leaders), and as such the Councilors do not have an entitlement to that money in the same way that they would have an entitlement to a salary
- Projects Councilor expressed the view that it is unfair to single out the Vice-President on the basis of his prior experience as a Councilor; she noted that universal standards must be set for the whole Council; she also noted that the Council take compassion into consideration when deciding on a penal code
- Vice-President noted that in the instance of someone not submitting a report, it can be assumed that the person in question did not do any work as the only available evidence for that work having been done is the report upon which it is based, therefore lack of submission of a report demands a high penalty
- Secretary General expressed the view that he is in fact not doing the job of the Student Benefits Councilor, and asked if it would be just for the Secretary General to be excused from other commitments in order to tend to the administrative aspects of his portfolio
- President requested that Councilors please remain on-topic (the suggestion of a penal code for the deduction of honorarium)
- Mr. Ofei advised that the Council be consistent in its execution of the plans to be proposed and resolved by Council; agrees that deductions must happen on the basis of proportionality; noted that the Council has institutional autonomy *except* where honorarium is concerned; the formulation of an Honorarium Document is very important and must be decided upon very soon otherwise Council will only receive its honorarium on the next pay-day

- Treasurer General noted that, with respect, she felt differently from the Projects and Student Benefits Councilors, citing the fact that Council will only function well if rules are applied strictly
- Oppidan Councilor asked what happened in 2017 when there were no deductions
- Mr. Ofei offered the following background to honorarium deductions:
  - o In the past, the President could unilaterally decide what deductions Councilors would be subjected to
  - o After 2011, that decision-making power was given to the SRC Liaison because of personal score-settling that took place under the previous system
  - o From 2012 onwards, Mr. Ofei would request Councils to furnish him with their own Honorarium Documents
  - o In short, in 2017, there were abuses of that system committed by Councilors
- Projects Councilor suggested, in the intermediary between the present meeting and the adoption of a finalized Honorarium Document, that if the Secretary General is late in submitting a report or some other important documentation, that 50% of honorarium be deducted; and that for every hour of lateness a further 25% be deducted as well; she further suggested that a general penalty applicable to all Councilors be applied by which 50% be deducted for failure to attend to an engagement without an apology
- Vice President noted that the deductions to be adopted must be underpinned by sound reasoning, and that the deductions decided in the present meeting must carry over into the finalized honorarium document for purposes of consistency
- Projects Councilor noted that it is not only possible but necessary to adopt a series of provisional/ad hoc deductions until a final Honorarium Document is decided upon
- Residence Councilor requested that the Council please move on
- Community Engagement Councilor suggested a special meeting be convened for decisions relating to honorarium
- Mr. Ofei noted *inter alia* that the Council must take seriously the job that it does, which in this instance translates to taking seriously the formation of an

honorarium document even if it is ad hoc; for instance certain things that took place during 1<sup>st</sup> years' registration weekend must be accounted for (lateness/non-attendance)

- Secretary General agreed with the adoption of a setoff provisional/ad hoc arrangements with respect to honorarium
- Environmental Councilor noted that the instances of which Mr. Ofei spoke are special instances, and must be accounted for because – for instance – a 1<sup>st</sup> year registration weekend only takes place once a year, and that the Council's reputation is at stake in such instances
- Secretary General responded by noting that the Council's reputation is at stake in other instances and scenarios, therefore on that reasoning alone 1<sup>st</sup> Year Registration is not special
- Mr. Ofei noted that 1<sup>st</sup> Year Registration Weekend is special in that it is a unique event that the Council will never have the chance to re-do/undo
- Treasurer General requested that Mr. Ofei inform the Council in respect of the procedure for direct responses to points raised in meetings
- Mr. Ofei noted that direct responses are at the discretion of the Chair
- VOTE (ad hoc honorarium arrangements):
  - o 25% deduction for lateness per hour      1 Councilor in favour
  - o 10% deduction for lateness per hour      3 Councilors in favour
  - o ABSTENTIONS      10 Councilors
    - *Nothing passes*
- VOTE (ad hoc honorarium arrangements):
  - o 50% deduction if the Secretary General is late in submitting reports/important documentation
    - COUNCIL DID NOT VOTE ON THIS
- VOTE (ad hoc honorarium arrangements):
  - o 7,5% deduction every half-hour for lateness at 1<sup>st</sup> Year Registration
    - 2 Councilors in favour
  - o 5% deduction every half-hour for lateness at 1<sup>st</sup> Year Registration
    - 9 Councilors in favour
  - o ABSTENTIONS
    - 3 Councilors

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO 5% DEDUCTION FOR EVERY HALF-HOUR OF LATENESS AT 1<sup>ST</sup> YEAR REGISTRATION**

- Mr. Ofei noted that he would take the Council's resolution on further consideration
- VOTE (ad hoc honorarium arrangements):
  - 5% deduction for non-attendance of Council engagement at the Monument
    - 5 Councilors in favour
  - 10% deduction for non-attendance of Council engagement at the Monument
    - 4 Councilors in favour
  - ABSTENTIONS
    - 5 Councilors

**NOTHING PASSES**

- RE-VOTE (ad hoc arrangements):
  - 7,5% deduction for non-attendance at the Monument
    - 3 Councilors in favour
  - 15% deduction for non-attendance at the Monument
    - 10 Councilors in favour

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO 15% DEDUCTION FOR NON-ATTENDANCE AT THE MONUMENT**

- VOTE TO HAVE FURTHER DISCUSSION ABOUT OTHER AD HOC ARRANGEMENTS IN RESPECT OF HONORARIUM AT THE DE-BREIF MEETING TO BE HELD 5 FEBRUARY 2019 AT 10H00
  - 8 Councilors in favour

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO HOLD FURTHER DISCUSSION ABOUT OTHER AD HOC ARRANGEMENTS IN RESPECT OF HONORARIUM IN THE ABOVEMENTIONED FASHION**

## IPYG

- Council resolved to partnership with IPYG with 9 Councilors voting in favour thereof

## POLICE ON CAMPUS

- President noted that CPU wants Council input regarding police presence on campus
- Oppidan Councilor added that the idea behind this is to improve the image of the police in the students' eyes
- Secretary General requested more information regarding the background of the idea proposed by CPU; he noted that threats to student safety are less severe than on other places in Grahamstown
- Vice-President agreeing with Secretary General noted that police resources constitute a zero-sum game: more police presence on campus equates to less police presence elsewhere, and that those resources would be better situated in places that do not have the same class-based privilege that Rhodes University has
- Mr. Ofei noted that he was impressed at the way in which the Vice-President and the Secretary General were thinking in respect of their considerations for the broader Grahamstown community; he also noted that the Council must be prepared to defend their decision to do this in the event that the greater student body inquires about this decision
- Projects Councilor added that, in light of events that have transpired in the past, students might feel intimidated by greater police presence on campus given the already tenuous relationship between students and the police
- Mr. Ofei urged Council to stick to the first line of reasoning presented by Vice-President and Secretary General
- **COUNCIL IS RESOLVED NOT TO SUPPORT THE ABOVEMENTIONED PROPOSITION BY CPU**
- Mr. Ofei noted that this decision must be made clear to the student body so as to be fair to University Management; and requested that a statement be drafted to this end

## PURPLE THURSDAY

- Projects Councilor reported that Journalism students want to profile the President on behalf of the SRC and requested that footage be taken of the President during Purple Thursday
- Secretary General sought clarity on whether it was the President as an individual who would be profiled or the Council as an institution
- Projects Councilor clarified that the profile would be done specifically of the President as an individual
- Environmental Councilor expressed the view that, in light hereof, it was unnecessary to bring it forward as an agenda point in the present meeting
- President assented to being profiled

## SPONSORSHIPS

- Student Benefits Councilor reported that Saints' Bistro expressed the desire to extend the relationship it has with the student body and the Council by using the Council to advertise their business on their behalf, and would have benefits like free use of their venue in return
- Secretary General noted that Council cannot endorse the brand of Saints' via apparel, which in any event violates the dress code of the SRC
- Vice-President added that Saints' has an air of exclusivity, and it would thus be exclusive to those financially challenged students to host events on their premises
- **COUNCIL RESOLVED THAT IT IS AMABLE TO THE IDEA OF SPONSORSHIP BY SAINTS' WITH THE PROVISIO THAT THE SRC DOES NOT PARTAKE IN ANY BRAND ENDORSEMENT OF SAINTS' AS A BUSINESS**

## Nkoli-Fassie

- Transformation Councilor reported that he had received an email from the society stating that they want to deal with consent and privilege talks on



campus; he noted that if the Council rejects the society's proposition they would be branded in a bad light by the society

- Secretary General noted that consent talks are a good idea but that it needs to be improved upon, given the experience from last year
- Vice-President noted that the Council as an institution has had problems with the society in the past, which makes their present relationship with Council that much more complicated; he noted his agreement with Secretary General, adding that the consent talks be facilitated by an entity other than Nkoli-Fassie
- Mr. Ofei noted that students felt that Nkoli-Fassie was hostile, and agreed with the proposition to have another entity facilitate the consent talks

### **RedBull**

- Projects Councilor noted that RedBull wanted to host an event at Rhodes to take place on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2019
- Vice-President asked if Council is still on board with RedBull regarding the paper planes initiative
- Mr. Ofei noted that Projects Councilor should have reverted back to RedBull with a response in relation thereto
- Projects Councilor noted that an email has already been sent to RedBull but a response has not yet been received; she also received an email regarding the Paper Planes Initiative, and reported that it would be postponed; a meeting with an individual named Samantha must happen
- Vice-President asked if Council is on board or not
- Mr. Ofei noted that Council must first know what it is that Council would agreeing to before it makes a decision to commit, and that documentation must be presented to Council first

### **Parking**

- Secretary General noted that everyone is parking on the grass on the Union Lawns, and that it needs to stop

- Mr. Ofei suggested that people found parking on the grass must be charged with a fine for parking on the grass, and that CPU must put up "DO NOT PARK" signs

### **Mr. Ofei**

- Noted that Matters Arising added to the agenda must be minimized by email agenda points to the Secretary General
- Agenda items must be sent on time, and added to Matters Arising only if it is an emergency
- Worried about Council members not contributing in meetings both in sittings of the Council, as well as those with other entities
- Noted that body language in meetings is important; bad body language sends a bad message to those with whom you are meeting
- Secretary General must respond to the student regarding Student Defence immediately
  - o *Secretary General clarified in the meeting of 11 February 2019 that this was in relation to an email sent to him re: student to which he must respond*
- Is awaiting Dining Hall visit debriefs urgently
- Noted that Councilors must have greater respect for punctuality; to this end the deductions on honorarium stand as follows for lateness:
  - o 15% for the first hour of lateness
  - o 30% for the second hour of lateness
  - o 45% for the third hour of lateness
    - Appeals are to be submitted by 12h00 on 5 February

**MEETING ADJOURNED**