



MINUTES FOR A MEETING OF COUNCIL CARSLAW TUTORIAL ROOM 359 6:00PM ON 24TH JANUARY 2013

Chair: Angelus Morningstar

Minutes: Mike de Waal

Attendance: Stephen Beverley-Wong, Timothy Scriven, Tom Munro, Joanne Gad, Mike de Waal, Angelus Morningstar, Peter Mendis, Pip Muratore, Nicole Doughty, Cyrus Achaemanian, Zhila Bahman

1 Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome

The President opened the meeting at 6:02pm with an Acknowledgement of Country.

2 Governance

2.1 Apologies

Audrey Irish
Amy Mao
Siva Purushothuman
David Follent
Khawaja Almas
Kylee Hartman-Warren
Tuba Omer

2.2 Proxies

Amy Mao to Joanne Gad
Siva Purushothuman to Alice Brandli (2nd pref: Tuba Omer, 3rd pref: Kylee Hartman-Warren)
Khawaja Almas to Joanne Gad
Tuba Omer to Mike de Waal

★ 2.3 Starring of Items

The Council was invited to identify any items not currently scheduled for discussion.

The Vice President (Community)'s report was starred.

Motion [JAN13-01]: That Council accepts all un-starred items.

Moved: Angelus Morningstar **Seconded:** Tom Munro **Consensus.**

2.4 Resignation

Manna Mostaghim has resigned from Council.

2.5 Leave

Kareena Denley

3 Minutes of Meetings

3.1 Minutes of the previous month's meetings

3.1.1 Management Committee, 7th January

3.1.2 Management Committee, 14th January

Minutes of the November Council meeting were accepted at the Management Committee meeting of 7th January.

Recommendation: That Council accepts the tabled minutes, with noted amendments.

Attached documentation: Minutes of the abovementioned meetings.

★ 3.2 Business Arising From Minutes

4 Reports of Meetings

4.1 Reports of the previous month's meetings

4.1.1 Policy Committee

Recommendation: That Council accepts the tabled reports.

Attached documentation: Reports of the abovementioned meetings.

★ 4.2 Business Arising From Reports

5 Officer Reports

★ 5.1 President

The President will deliver his report verbally.

The President delivered his report verbally. This month has been quiet in university interaction. There are no regular Committee meetings until February. Relocation logistics are still taking up time. The SSAF re-submission is almost ready.

John Nowakowski's death has affected everything. Office shutdown was yesterday. It's his recommendation that all councillors that receive a stipend may claim a full day. That's mostly relevant to him as he does a full-time load, but part-timers should also be allowed. COI declared for office-bearers.

Motion [JAN13-02]: That all Councillors who receive a stipend may use 23rd January as a full day's claim.

Moved: Angelus Morningstar **Seconded:** Stephen Beverley-Wong **Carried (11, 1, 1)**

The Co-Treasurer added that for people who had worked closely with John, it was something they had to attend, so this is reasonable.

5.2 Vice President (Community)

Timothy Scriven

5.3 Vice President (Policy)

Kylee Hartman-Warren

★ 5.4 Vice President (Publications)

This report was delivered verbally by the President.

The President explained that when the Vice President (Publications) was admitted to hospital, he and the Vice President (Policy) took over his duties. The 2013 Calendar is done, and the Survival Guide is at a point where it's under review. The Thesis Guide will take a little bit more time. We want Survival Guide to be out by Orientation Week.

★ 5.5 Treasurer

Joanne Gad and Khawaja Almas

This report was not received on time. Council may vote to accept it at the meeting.

The Co-Treasurer explained that she did not submit a report for Treasurer or Education Officer as she had not claimed hours over the period.

Motion [JAN13-03]: That Council accept the Treasurer and Education Officer reports.

Moved: Angelus Morningstar **Seconded:** Thomas Munro **Consensus.**

Cyrus Achaemanian and Zhila Bahman arrived at 6:17pm.

5.6 Secretary

Mike de Waal

★ 5.7 Education Officer

Joanne Gad

See the Treasurer's report (Item 5.5).

5.8 Equity Officers

5.8.1 International Officer

Tuba Omer

5.8.2 Disabilities Officer

Timothy Scriven

5.8.3 Queer Officer

Tom Munro

5.8.4 Women's Officer

Kareena Denley

Due to the Women's Officer's current absence, no report will be given.

5.8.5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer

David Follent

5.8.6 Equity Convenor

Tom Munro

Recommendation: That Council accepts the tabled reports of Offices.

Attached documentation: Reports of Officers.

★ 5.9 Business Arising From Reports

The Vice President (Community) spoke to the recommendation in his report about SUPRA closing on

the day of the upcoming staff strike. He argued that it would be very difficult for SUPRA to open on the day, even if we wanted to. He also argued that we need to stand in solidarity with the NTEU. Many postgraduates are actually also university staff and are thus affected by the current bargaining process.

One councillor agreed, provided that our constituency is given fair warning through eGrad.

The President affirmed that it would go out at least a week in advance.

Motion [JAN13-04]: That SUPRA closes on the day of the NTEU strike, should such a strike occur, and that staff be given the day off.

Moved: Timothy Scriven **Seconded:** Pip Muratore Consensus.

6 Verbal Report from a Member of Staff

No report was given.

★ 7 Budget 2013

Motion [JAN13-05]: That this item be discussed *in camera*.

Moved: Angelus Morningstar **Seconded:** Thomas Munro **Carried** (8 for, 4 against, 1 abstention)

The item was discussed *in camera*.

The President procedurally moved the meeting *ex camera*.

★ 8 SUPRA Electoral Reform

The documentation for this item was submitted late. Council may vote to debate it.

The President left this item for noting. The meeting that afternoon showed that there was still a lot of work to do.

★ 9 SUPRA Policy Regulations

The President initially noted that 03.02 must be reviewed to cite that Council may overrule Executive interpretations.

The Co-Treasurer asked when this proposal was drafted.

The President responded that he drafted it in December. The impetus was that a lot of policies don't have to come to Council, and would work better with lower thresholds to respond to them. A good example is the staff hiring process. Since Council only meets once per month, it's very inefficient to wait.

The Vice President (Community) noted that it is important that we do not require an Absolute Majority to interpret something, simply because an Absolute Majority is not present at all meetings. A clause that Council will be the final interpreter would also be important. A meeting should always be able to override the Chair.

The President responded that he feels as if Council has not properly assessed the document.

The President ruled to defer the item.

Cyrus Achaemanian entered the room at 7:10pm.

★ 10 SUPRA Rules of Order

The President spoke to the item and reviewed the document with the Council.

1.03 Majority Rule

Several councillors raised section 1.03 “Majority Rule” as problematic.

The Co-Treasurer argued that Council should undertake decisions because it actually wants it, rather than because a few people want them and there is an ignorant majority.

The Vice President (Community) responded that the implication of that would be that abstentions are effectively counted as ‘no’ votes. When you abstain, you don’t want to weight a decision. You just ‘want out’.

The President agreed, adding that people abstain for a variety of reasons. Often they aren’t committed, so they don’t want their vote to affect the outcome. The reason why it’s the other way now is because you want to make sure Council is confident in its decisions.

The Co-Treasurer responded that abstentions aren’t dissent, but contribute to a lack of support. If there is a lack of support, that’s not good enough. It’s correct to interpret it that way.

The Vice-President (Community) argued that if people don’t understand a motion, they should probably vote no. That shows the motion hasn’t been explained well, and that sort of motion is dangerous. Abstentions should not be used for that. The thing about an abstention is that you may have a subtle conflict of interest, or you don’t think it is your place to take a position on something.

One councillor noted that he had seen that happen before: people abstaining not out of lack of clarity, but lack of prior understanding. People have explicitly said. “I don’t know enough” regarding, for instance, a certain budgetary decision. They don’t want to stuff things up.

The President took a straw poll on this recommendation. It was inconclusive.

Another councillor asked if we could define abstention. Perhaps that would help clarify things.

The President responded that it’s not about what it means, but about what it does.

The Co-Treasurer reiterated that abstentions are a soft way of saying “I don’t really want the motion to go through”.

The President explained various other changes to types of motions and meeting process. There were no objections.

2.07 Conflicts of Interest

The Vice President (Community) raised 2.07 “Conflicts of Interest”, noting that Disclosures of Interest are different to Conflicts of Interest.

The President noted that Conflict of Interest declarations are required by the SUPRA Constitution. However, he does not want to force councillors to declare Disclosures of Interest.

One councillor asked if we want to say “when there’s a motion involved” instead of “at the beginning

of the meeting”?

The President responded that that probably happens naturally. The Chair asking for general Conflicts of Interest at the start of the meeting would make things more efficient, though.

4.03 Substantive Motions

The President noted that substantive motions should be submitted in writing. This is useful for big motions.

The President agreed to insert “if required by the chair” to 4.03: 1.

Motions to amend the SUPRA Rules of Order

The Co-Treasurer proposed an amendment to section 1.03: a condition that total Yes or No votes must be at least equal to quorum. The Vice President (Community) rejected this, and she withdrew it.

Motion [JAN13-06]: To amend 1.03 as tabled.

Moved: Timothy Scriven **Seconded:** Thomas Munro

An objection was noted.

The motion was put to a vote and **carried** (10 for, 3 against, 0 abstentions).

The Co-Treasurer proposed an amendment to section 1.03: a condition that total Yes or No votes must be at least equal to quorum. The Vice President (Community) rejected this, and she withdrew it.

Motion [JAN13-07]: To accept all other amendments as tabled.

Moved: Timothy Scriven **Seconded:** Joanne Gad **Consensus.**

Proxies

It was asked how proxies have worked in the past.

The President responded that those giving proxies may either trust someone’s judgement, or specifically give their vote in a certain way.

One councillor noted that when we’ve had people stocking up on proxies, they’ve all been of one mind.

Items with Motions

The Co-Treasurer asked if there was a way of saying that tabled items should come with a suggested motion.

The President that it is customary. It’s possible for people to table amendments to the Rules of Order now.

Cyrus Achaemanian left the room at 7:44pm. He passed his proxy to Timothy Scriven.

The Co-Treasurer asked if people would support requiring a written motion with an item.

The President responded that that would be fine. He asked her to circulate an amendment.

★ 11 Post Study Work Visa

Defer to next Council.

★ 12 Whitehaven Motion

Preamble:

The largest forest in the Liverpool plains is scheduled to be ripped apart, for the sake of building two new coal mines, and in so doing would wipe out 1360 hectares of critically endangered koala habitat and a sizeable amount of farmland.

This recent week, Jonathan Moylan made national news when he engaged in non-violent direct action; Moylan issued a hoax press release stating that the ANZ Bank had withdrawn support for the Maules Creek coal mining project in the Liverpool Plains. Moylan's actions temporarily wiped over \$300 million of value in Whitehaven Coal's shares.

Sen. Lee Rhiannon and Sen. Christine Milne have subsequently come out in support of Jonathan Moylan and his actions as an environmentalist.

~~*The right wing hate media that is the Murdoch Press has since attacked Moylan and his supporters.*~~

Platform:

SUPRA recognises that our environment is too precious to lose and in particular, that the construction of new mines in the Liverpool Plains is abhorrent.

SUPRA recognises that the environmental movement has a proud history of non-violent direct action which fights for laws that are just and at times break those which are not.

SUPRA believes our elected representatives should support activist movements.

Action:

That SUPRA formally condemns Whitehaven Coal Ltd.'s mining expansion on the Liverpool Plains.

That SUPRA formally congratulate and endorse the actions of Jonathan Moylan and Frontline Action Against Coal in the fight against environmental destruction in the Liverpool plains.

The Vice President (Community) spoke to the motion, reiterating that SUPRA should support activist causes.

The President requested that the final line of the Preamble be struck. The Vice President (Community) consented to this.

The Equity Convenor asked if we could insert a line in the "Action" section about releasing a press release or sending a letter. The Vice President (Community) responded that more action is always good. A group of friends are thinking of sending a medal to Moylan. That's a nice gesture.

The Secretary asked what specifically Moylan was being charged with. Various members of Council responded that Moylan was facing multiple charges, one of which is being in breach of the Corporations Act.

One councilor argued that Moylan did \$300 million of damage. She cannot support a motion that condones breaking Australian law.

The Vice President (Community) responded that the end amount of damage was only \$450,000. He further argued that civil disobedience is a fundamental part of student activism.

The Secretary agreed with the Vice President (Community). He argued that we need to think about the long run.

The Co-Treasurer noted that she had reservations about breaking the law. But people create the law and they can turn anyone who disagrees with them into a criminal. It's important to stand up for what is right.

Motion [JAN13-08]: That SUPRA adopts the Whitehaven motion.

Moved: Timothy Scriven **Seconded:** Stephen Beverley **Carried** (10 for, 1 against, 2 abstentions).

The abstentions of Amy Mao and Khawaja Almas were noted.

★ 13 CAPA Affiliation 2013

The President declared his Conflict of Interest as a national office-bearer of CAPA.

The President asked Council if we will approve the expenditure.

The Co-Treasurer noted that it is slightly larger than what we expected: \$24,800 rather than \$23000.

The President explained how the \$24,800 is calculated. We do not have to pay GST on this, which takes it back under budget.

The Vice President (Community) added that sometimes organisations ask for waivers or partial waivers, and sometimes CAPA will accept them.

Motion [JAN13-09]: That SUPRA pays its affiliation fees to CAPA for 2013

Moved: Thomas Munro **Seconded:** Nicole Doughty **Consensus.**

14 Legal Service Statistics (July-October 2012)

This item is for noting.

★ 15 Other business

Hiring Process [In camera]

For a discussion about staffing, the meeting automatically moved *in camera*.

Motion [JAN13-10]: That Council approves the hiring process for a new SAAO.

Moved: Angelus Morningstar **Seconded:** Joanne Gad **Consensus.**

The meeting moved *ex camera*.

Donation to Nowakowski Family

The President recommended that Council vote to organise a card from SUPRA to John's family, as well as a donation to the La Salle organisation.

The President added that a process has commenced to recommend awarding John's degree posthumously. There are certain criteria. He was a PhD candidate, but then reduced his scope to a Master's by Research. A stumbling block is that he did withdraw, but this was at least partially due to illness. A member of the family would receive it during an academic ceremony, and may be awarded by the President of SUPRA.

It was added that some sort of John Nowakowski Award might be established. It could fill a huge gap in awarding student leadership on campus.

The Vice President (Community) recommended that we try to make the Award flexible. He further noted that he felt like SUPRA should make a donation, but he is concerned that it is not to a secular charity.

The President asked if Council would be happy to communicate a monetary amount to the brother and father, but ask if they would prefer for such money to be invested in the creation of an Award instead. Hearing general consensus, the President agreed to return to next Council meeting for more discussion about the direction of the funds.

Motion [JAN13-11]: That Council create a card from SUPRA to be signed by members of Council and staff, and delivered to his family.

Moved: Angelus Morningstar **Seconded:** Timothy Scriven **Consensus.**

Inductions

The President noted that SUPRA would require 5-6 volunteers for this period.

Pip Muratore, Peter Mendis, and the Executive registered their interest.

The Passing of John Nowakowski

Motion [JAN13-14]: That SUPRA Council thank the late John Nowakowski for his tireless contributions to the postgraduate community at the University of Sydney and nationally, and that we express our condolences to his family, and that we express our grief at the passing of such a good man.

Moved: Angelus Morningstar **Seconded:** Timothy Scriven **Consensus.**

The President closed the meeting at 8:22pm.