
MINUTES OF THE AUSA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MONDAY 31 MAY 2021



Shadows Bar | 2:00pm – 3:00pm

Present: President, WVP, eNVP, QRO, MSO (Te Rina), PISO, Treasurer-Secretary, ISO, EVP, WRO and 129 Members of the Association

In Attendance: Renata White (Te Mana Akonga Co-Tumuaki), Will Watterson (General Manager), Careen Jack (Advocacy Manager), Blake Monk (Advocacy and Welfare Coordinator), Temitope Adelekan (Class Representatives and International Buddies Manager), Nick Withers (IT/Design Manager), Sharon Zhang (Accountant)

Meeting commenced 2:18pm

1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1.1. *Welcome*

The President opens the meeting and greets the attendees. She proceeds to summarise the standing orders for the meeting with includes:

- The AUSA Executive and members of staff will have the right of reply where relevant and necessary
- Any question or comment posed throughout the meeting will be final and will not include a follow up question.
- All comments and replies from the attendees will be kept to 3 minutes maximum to allow for other questions and to factor in time.

1.2. *Acceptance of the Minutes of the Special General Meeting held on 28 August 2020.*

CHAIR

THAT the Minutes of the Special General Meeting held on 28 August 2020 be accepted as a true and accurate record.

Carried Unanimously

2. ANNUAL REPORT

The Chair invited the previous President George Barton to speak to the Annual Report for 2020. In summary, George highlighted key wins for the Auckland University Student Association in the main three aspects of AUSA: Student Voice, Student Advocacy and Student Experience. He highlighted that due to the unprecedented beginning of 2020, AUSA was pushed to adapt to an unknown environment which led to the introduction of a grade bump, increased advocacy for student welfare, the work of the Student Council, and the collaboration with AUPISA, NTM and the faculty student associations. In terms of student experience, AUSA managed to run the first ever Party in the Spark which was the largest orientation concert to date. The past President also acknowledges the reforms that AUSA has had to make to be here today and acknowledges the hard work of the staff and the Advisory board.

Since the Audited Reports are not yet ready due to external factors, an SGM will be hosted at a later date to confirm these documents.

CHAIR

THAT the Annual Report as at 31 December 2020 be received and adopted.

Carried Unanimously

3. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE AUSA CONSTITUTION

The Chair begins by explaining the proposed changes regarding the AGM date. Currently, the AGM must be held within the teaching weeks of Semester One. The Executive wishes to extend this timeline to the mid-semester break of Semester Two as this would allow the audited documents and the financials to be ready for the membership to view. Note that this year's AGM is a testimony of the restrictions that this timeline poses as although the AGM is held in the last week of the semester, the audited reports and financials are not yet ready.

The AUSA Executive propose the following Constitutional Changes:

1. That the deadline for the AUSA AGM be extended to no later than Week 7 of Semester 2 to allow a more realistic timeframe for audited financials to be completed

- Proposed amendment:
 - Delete Section 14(1); and
 - Substitute

“14(1): An Annual General Meeting will be held each Association Year during a teaching week before the mid-semester break of Semester Two.”

A member wished to clarify that although this deadline has been pushed back, this would not prohibit the Executive from holding an AGM in Semester if the documents are ready to be viewed. The Chair confirms that this is the case.

CHAIR

THAT all proposed changes to Section 14 subsection 1 of the AUSA Constitution notified to members on 14 May 2021, with the exception of those changes relating to the deletion or creation of roles on the AUSA Executive, be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

The Chair moves on to the next motion and explains that the member who was elected into this role last year has resigned. The Executive wishes to disestablish this position on the basis that the now resigned Campaigns Officer did not manage to find a particular function that this position would serve on the executive that the Engagement Vice-President could not fulfil.

A member of the association questions the role and the duties of the Campaigns Officer. The Chair responds that the Campaigns Officer was in charge of running the campaigns for AUSA throughout their term. For the Campaigns Officer, they would be in charge of figuring out which campaigns the Executive would want to run throughout their term and decide which ones were the most prominent since all portfolios and officers would have differing opinions.

The AUSA Executive propose the following Constitutional Changes:

1. That the Campaigns Officer role be disestablished.
 - Proposed amendment: That Section 18(6) be deleted

CHAIR

THAT the proposed change to the Constitution to disestablish the role of Campaigns Officer be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

4. NEW ZEALAND UNION OF STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS (NZUSA)

To begin, the President of AUSA stands down as Chair for this section as she wishes to speak to this matter and Bob Lack, a life member of both AUSA and NZUSA, chairs the rest of the meeting. The proposal is taken as read.

The President of AUSA begins by explaining that in the previous years, AUSA Executives have had concerns regarding their membership with NZUSA whether this was through the funding provided through levy or with personal relationships within the National Council. Executives have voiced their concerns that they have not been receiving the benefit worth their levy

payment in previous years but their voices have not resulted in any significant reformation within the NZUSA structure. As a result, the AUSA Executive has decided to put forward the motion to leave NZUSA which has been passed by the Executive and endorsed by the Student Council.

The Chair reads out the following recommendations that has been accepted, passed and endorsed as stated above:

1. Pending a majority vote at an AUSA General Meeting, AUSA should give NZUSA 12 months' notice that we are terminating our membership in accordance to section 5.6 of the NZUSA constitution
2. AUSA will use the remaining 12 months of our membership to work collaboratively with NZUSA and its members to see if any reform can be affected from within the organization to address the issues outlined in this document.
3. AUSA is committed to working collaboratively with Te Mana Ākonga and Tauria Pasifika to ensure their ongoing financial security
4. Revisit the topic of NZUSA membership in early 2022 and make a decision, in consultation with our members, whether we will rejoin or not.

A member wishes to clarify that the decision to re-join NZUSA as mentioned in the fourth recommendation will be discussed before the 12-month notice period has ended to give the members a chance to rethink their position in leaving NZUSA. To this, the President of AUSA states that this decision does not need to be discussed at the next AGM but can be brought up at an SGM. The member wishes to make a clarification to the motion regarding the deadline of the revisitation of the topic, but this was overruled by the Chair as the President has not finished speaking. However, the Chair clarifies that the date at which this topic is rediscussed is at the discretion of the Executive.

Members wished to hear about the reforms AUSA are looking for within the next 12 months in order to remain a member of NZUSA. The AUSA General Manager and Welfare Vice-President speak to this and explain that some of the specific changes that AUSA are looking for are expanded upon within the proposal distributed to the members via the AUSA website including a potential solution on decreasing the levies significantly while maintaining the *status quo* in terms of KPIs. Although a national voice that is coalesced with NZUSA is important, this should not be worth approximately \$45,000 annually before tax. Many of the issues that NZUSA had

been pushing last during an unprecedented year were things that didn't benefit Auckland Students specifically. In addition, when students did benefit, those who are not members such as AUT, Waikato, and Canterbury, benefitted regardless evident in the campaigns for increased course related costs. AUSA threatening to leave is the only way that AUSA feels they will be heard. Ideally, NZUSA would restructure to be an association that associations would be proud to be a part of, and those who are not members such as those mentioned above, would be eager to join.

Following this, a member asked why AUSA did not agree for a renegotiation of fees when prompted by NZUSA. The President responded that OUSA put forth a motion to decrease the amount that they pay, but this motion was dismissed immediately. As a result, AUSA decided against renegotiating their levy as OUSA, who pays the same amount as AUSA, was denied. The Chair clarifies that NZUSA has a two-tier model, but AUSA believes that an Association Membership is not considered as AUSA would not want to be a part of the national voice if they were not active partakers.

Members from Nga Taurua Maori voiced their concerns on how this impacts the Maori students since NZUSA funds Te Mana Akonga from the money that they receive from the levies. The President and the General Manager of AUSA reassure the membership that leaving TMA and TP financially unstable is not their intention given that TMA specifically has a major impact on the Maori students of the University of Auckland. In fact, AUSA outlines that they are willing to commit financially to TMA and TP directly if AUSA does leave NZUSA. The voices of the student body, primarily Pasifika and Maori voices, will continue to be heard on a national level regardless as NZUSA will continue to advocate for all students regardless of ethnicity. AUSA is willing to amend the motion to 'withdraw provided it provides the *pro rata* contribution to Te Mana Akonga and Taurua Pasifika.' Renata White speaks to this and confirms that TMA does receive around \$40,000 from NZUSA through a Memorandum of Understanding.

Another member of the association argues that leaving will isolate Auckland students more so from an organisation that AUSA claims to be 'Wellington-centric'. Speaking in favour, members of the Executive state that AUSA currently pays a lot of money to ensure that we are not isolated, but the problem is not solely on the location although it plays a major role. The issue of NZUSA being 'Wellington-centric' lies in the issues that they campaign for which aren't

necessarily as important for Auckland students. For example, NZUSA did not reach out to AUSA when the sexual harassment case occurred a few weeks ago.

Members enter into a discussion to propose an amendment to clarify when an SGM will be held in the first semester next year to discuss the membership of AUSA within NZUSA. The Chair puts to vote the following motion:

CHAIR

THAT conditional on AUSA withdrawing from NZUSA, an SGM will be held before July 2022 to reconsider the motion to leave permanently before the 12 months' notice period is up.

Carried Unanimously

Members are in favour of amending the motion put forward by the AUSA Executive to clarify the deadline regarding an SGM to reconsider leaving NZUSA before this decision is permanent. Many of these members also seem to be in favour of this provided that it does not provide a real terms deduction in funding to TMA and TP. As voted and passed, the amended motion is as follows:

CHAIR

THAT in accordance with section 5.6 of the NZUSA Constitution, AUSA give 12 months' notice to the NZUSA President that we are leaving NZUSA. During the subsequent 12 months, AUSA will commit to working with NZUSA to address our concerns in order to create enough reform so that the next AUSA Executive can be confident about re-joining NZUSA if there is a mandate from the students to do so. In addition, an SGM will be held before July 2022 to reconsider the withdrawal of AUSA as a member of NZUSA.

For: 50

Against: 28

Abstained: 12

5. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was raised.

6. CLOSING

The President of AUSA thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Meeting closed 3:22pm

Signed as a TRUE and ACCURATE RECORD

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anamika Harirajh', written over a horizontal line.

Anamika Harirajh
President and Chair of the AUSA Executive Meeting, 2021