

## WEEF Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

November 22, 2007

E2-3324

### Present:

Alex James, Matthieu Poirier, Matthew Stevens, Denis Viens, Bill Pudifin, Adel Sedra, Maria Arshad, Timo Vainionpaa, Brandon DeHart, Mike Spendlove, Jonathan Holder

### Proxies:

Bahman Hadji and Amanda Hoff (proxied to Brandon DeHart)

Meghan Burke (proxied to Jonathan Holder)

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm.

### **1. Approval of Agenda**

*Motion to approve agenda*

Motioner: Denis Viens

Seconded: Matt Stevens

Passed unanimously

### **2. Minutes**

Alex typed the minutes recently and will approve them at next meeting.

### **3. Board of Directors Election**

Matt Poirier is in 3B mechanical, been involved in WEEF, ran against Alex.

*Motion to approve Matt Poirier as a WEEF Board of Directors member*

Motioner: Matt Stevens

Seconded: Amanda Hoff (by proxy)

Passed unanimously

### **4. Directors Report & Discussion**

#### a. Refunds

Alex explained the results. He did class visits to talk about WEEF and refunds, but 1A classes still had low refund rates. 3B mechanical had a high refund rate! Denis mentioned that this is common. 1A Nano and 1A Civil and others had 100% donation rates.

Alex promoted WEEF during Frosh week, had many good questions, but a common misconception is that WEEF pays salaries of WEEF TA's. Denis suggested that WEEF TA's should change their names. Dean Sedra suggested speaking to David Brush or Ajoy Opal about changing their names.

Some discussion about WEEF advertising about WEEF lab, maybe a plaque.

Congratulations should be awarded to classes with 100%. Perhaps in an Iron warrior article? In the past, Maria has sent emails to everyone who donated.

Matt asked about results of WEEF survey from a few years ago. Mike will send results to Alex and Matt.

Arch has a 'reverse' trend: Older classes have fewer refunds, perhaps because they know of the benefits. Alex did receive a lot of 1A Arch refunds, since one likely rallied all the others. Jonathan talked about how a single class rep can get most of a whole class to get refunds.

Alex thinking about a WEEF forum in architecture. Stickers are present but difficult to see among sawdust in the shop. Perhaps we should get a plaque outside the Arch workshop? A 12K laser was just purchased for them. [Some discussion about the difficulty in transferring money to them.]

Matt talked about the importance of promotion and raising awareness of what WEEF buys. Maybe we need to talk to class reps about better promotion.

#### b. Proposals

Alex mentioned that lab instructors apparently seem reluctant to submit proposals. He linked this point to his next item: this term he delivered letters directly to mailboxes of lab instructors and staff about WEEF and WEEF funds. Most faculties were receptive. Civil and chemical departments responded especially well to the letters!

Mech, on the other hand, apparently doesn't have a clear breakdown of lab technicians or staff, since Alex wasn't able to track down those who needed to receive the letters. Dean Sedra found this concerning and suggested contacting Mike Hurst, the new mechanical lab director. Dean Sedra recommends copying him on the next group email. Bill suggested sending around a WEEF rep to visit them and remind them of WEEF and ask for proposals. Dean Sedra suggested emailing chairs directly. They might feel more responsibility to ensure a proposal gets submitted.

Brandon talked about holding a meeting/forum for all lab technicians to inform them of proposal rules and formatting, and presentation guidelines. Mike suggested updating the website with this material in case some technicians miss the meeting.

#### c. Student Teams Centre:

The Student Teams Centre (STC) vote went through. A few comments and questions were brought up:

*Students were unsure what type of equipment would go in it. Is WEEF going to have to pay more to fill it with equipment? Will it still benefit non student team members?*

Matt S. explained that non student team members could and would still use it. Student projects (inc. 4<sup>th</sup> year projects) can also get done there and new teams created. Brandon said he wasn't sure how upper years would use the shop. Where do 4<sup>th</sup> year projects get stored? The current shop is always full around deadline time. Brandon talked to shop supervisors and they said that space in E3 could perhaps stay as a shop for teaching or training with equipment. Right now, most time is spent teaching students how to use tools. Should students receive mandatory training in shop equipment. Dean Sedra explained the shop will move, and was unsure about space after shop moves out. The space will likely be required for something else.

*How about the environmental sustainability of the new building? Students are concerned that it is not LEED certified.*

Dean Sedra mentioned that environmental sustainability was a prime concern in the building design. LEED certification pushes up costs incrementally, by as much as \$5 million. It may not be LEED platinum, but it is more sustainable.

Mike mentioned the concerns with current energy costs and how these will increase in the future. Dean Sedra explained that the Faculty of Engineering puts together funding for the building and the university pays operating costs. Dean Sedra suggested an environmental presentation by architects. Matt mentioned that the building construction is starting soon; however, the construction process could be more sustainability oriented.

*Is it WEEF's responsibility to promote this building?*

Timo thought so. Dean Sedra suggested talking with Carolyn Truemener and Linda Kenyon, Directors of Planning. Timo suggested developing a communications plan to student body and externally, highlighting how WEEF is the largest student endowment fund and this is the first time students have helped to this extent. WEEF should promote this as a way to gain support in the student body. We should see participation rates go up because of this. How do we capitalize on this building? Brandon suggested using WEEF Reps to promote this building.

*How do we sell this idea to architecture?*

Matt S. suggested that front display be used for arch projects, for example. Arch already has high refund rates. A power struggle between WEEF and class reps in architecture has broken out. Timo suggested that we need to emphasize how WEEF benefits everyone.

Brandon suggested telling arch how engineering has been putting money into WEEF since 1990 and how Arch has already received their money back for donations (around \$125 per donation.)

Matt S. stressed not having an Us vs Them approach. Alex suggested there's poor communication between WEEF and Architecture. Bill Pudifin suggested that better promotion be pursued, but avoid divisive statements. Matt S. clarified: we can sell the

arch display of projects in the building, and the machine shop will be better and still open to Arch.

Do we need an WEEF rep in Architecture? No continuity between terms. Maybe WASA (Waterloo Architecture Student's Association) roles should include WEEF responsibilities? Perhaps a WASA VP could have a director to act as WEEF liaison?

*Motion to ratify \$1M to STC project subordinated to term donations*

(Note: This is ratifying a motion from a previous meeting.)

Motioner: Alex

Seconder: Bahman

Against: Jonathan and his proxy

Abstentions: Matt P. and Mike

Motion passes with 10 votes in favour (including Amanda and Bahman by proxy)

Brandon suggested a bylaw change: Any major capital spending should be approved by both funding councils. At next board agenda will be reform of spending practices.

Mike asked about the timeline for the student forum with the E5 architects, and suggested during Dec. 4, 5 or 6. Dean Sedra agreed to look into it.

## **5. Funding Decision:**

Alex said he ran the budget for \$85,000, when it might only be \$80,000, and was worried about the extra 5K. Denis said not to worry about it.

The Nano robotics group was mostly grads and only 2 undergrads, and most of the proposal was for lab time and equipment, thus their funding was lower. WEEF will fund them more perhaps in future.

Denis asked about blank spaces in Requested column for student teams. Alex clarified that some numbers were unclear or got lost in email.

The Funding Council decided that since the balance is normally 80-20 in terms of division of WEEF funds between Departments and student teams, and because of the expense of the STC, they felt it was important to keep giving to Departments. Alex mentioned it was very tough cutting things down. Brandon mentioned student teams have been asked to lower their proposal amounts because of the STC. UWAFST asked for model cars and a laptop, which the FC didn't want to fund. Mechatronics asked for lots of money for similar 4<sup>th</sup> year project policy.

Denis said that 4<sup>th</sup> year projects should be listed under student teams. Mike argued that they were academic and should go under Departments. Brandon suggested that we follow the model where dept asks for money for capital expenditures based on student project requests. Expensive equipment items would then stay with dept. However, WEEF is ultimately a student's fund, so students should choose where to have their project listed.

Alex mentioned reps still wanted to see 4<sup>th</sup> year projects, but when Systems students ask for funds, it's hard to convince FC. For future terms, 4<sup>th</sup> year projects will talk to dept before being listed there. Need to encourage students to talk more to coordinate with lab instructors. Perhaps having a suggestion box? At next BoD meeting, we'll look at official policy for 4<sup>th</sup> year projects.

\$85,000 will be spent this term, but it could drop . 4% is the endowment payout to cover inflation and reserve. Buffer fund at \$210,000.

*Motion to Approve Funding Council spending decision*

Motion: Denis

Secunder: Alex

Passes with 2 abstentions: Amanda and Bahman (both by proxy).

## **6. Future WEEF business**

*Reduce \$75 amount?* Denis argued that people can get a refund but re-donate afterwards as much as they care to. Brandon mentioned that people might want to donate more or less.

Matt said that if we kept pace with inflation, we'd charge more. Mike said over \$110! Tuition also going up much faster. In real dollars, we're paying less.

2 year moratorium on funds is reasonable. Some projects don't get completed. 2 years does include a warning, sent out by Mary.

Mike raised concerns about how WEEF funds were invested, and if they were done ethically. Annual university financial statement should contain investments. Capability of WEEF to ethically invest is difficult. Brandon mentioned that if we can't get the information, we could work with SLE and AEF and request the information from University.

Bill Pudifin suggested speaking to Denis Hubert. The Board of Governors and UW Senate have the power to look at ethical investing of UW endowments.

## **7. Financial status of WEEF**

Current principal: \$7 570 185.95. In the last year, it has grown by \$383 430.86. (STC projected cost: 7.46 million)

## **8. Conclude Meeting**

*Motion to conclude the meeting*

Motioner: Denis

Secunder: Timo

Passes unanimously.