



Bishop's University

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF SENATE

A special meeting of Senate took place at the call of a number of Senators on Thursday, November 22, 2007 at 7:00 pm in Tomlinson Hall, McGreer 100.

Purpose of Meeting: Assessment by Senate of the memorandum of November 19th, 2007, signed by the Chair of Senate as it pertains to the academic business of the University.

Present: Dr. A. Johnson (in the Chair), Dr. C. Beauchamp, Dr. L. Bentabet, Prof. R. Brown, Dr. T. Bruestle, Dr. V. Faraoni, Dr. T. Fletcher, Dr. R. Harries, Mr. D. Horne, Mr. A. P. Martinez, Prof. L. McRae, Mr. T. Posie, Ms. A. Rowe, Prof. S. Sheeran, Mr. D. Thomas-Anderson, Dr. T. Ugland, Prof. C. Viens, Dr. M. Vigneault, Mr. J. Wald, Prof. D. Westman, Dr. B. Willms, Dr. L. Zubieta. (Dr. J. Rittenhouse addressed the meeting briefly at the beginning, and then left.)

Regrets: Mr. Y. Jodoin.

1. Call to Order (7:10)

After waiting ten minutes for the Chair of Senate to arrive, Dr. A. Johnson called the meeting to order as a duly constituted meeting of the Senate in his capacity as the senior Faculty Senator by years of service, in accordance with the RORs of the University.

He noted that he was serving as Chair in the absence of Dr. Poupart, and because Dr. J. Rittenhouse intended to be absent from the meeting for the main item of discussion.

2. Election of an Interim Recording Secretary

It was moved by Prof. C. Viens, and seconded by Dr. R. Harries, that Prof. D. Westman serve as Interim Recording Secretary for the meeting. The motion was adopted unanimously.

3. Assessment of the Memorandum of November 19th

Dr. A. Johnson noted that this meeting had been called to allow Senate to assess the memorandum of November 19th as it pertains to the academic business of the University. He then asked Senators how they wished to proceed.

C. Viens proposed that Dr. J. Rittenhouse be invited to address Senate before his departure from the meeting. There were no objections.

Dr. Rittenhouse said that he had been concerned by the memorandum of November 19th and by the abrupt cancellation of the Senate meeting that same evening. He expressed his concerns to other Senators, and he found that enough shared his concerns to justify the calling of this special meeting. He said he had thought it was necessary to call this meeting in order to give the Principal an opportunity to present the full context and rationale behind the memorandum. He added that it was therefore unfortunate that the Principal was not at this meeting, and he suggested that Senate might want to put off its assessment of the memorandum until it had heard from the Principal. He said that this would be up to the rest of Senate to decide, since, given his personal involvement in these issues, he intended to leave the meeting after his remarks.

Dr. Rittenhouse then explained how events had unfolded this week. He said that he had not been consulted ahead of time, and that he had simply received a letter from the Principal Monday morning informing him that he had been granted an administrative leave starting January 1. He said that he had indicated at that time that he disagreed with the contents of the letter, and that Tuesday morning he had sent a letter to the Principal reiterating his disagreement and providing the Principal with his own proposal for his administrative leave. On Wednesday the Vice-President of Corporation David Price, who had just come from a meeting with the parties that had written the memorandum of November 19, met with him. Mr. Price made it clear that the parties still had difficulties with Dr. Rittenhouse's proposal regarding his administrative leave. Finally, seeing no other resolution, this morning he called the President of Corporation and left a voice message indicating that he would forgo his administrative leave altogether.

Dr. Rittenhouse then said that, as things stand now, since last semester and through the summer negotiations and into the early fall he

has been taking on more and more responsibilities than would be considered usual for the Vice-Principal. He added that some of these duties had been assigned to him because of his position, but that others had been given to him because people had thought that he was the appropriate person to take care of them. His preference would be to stay and to continue to work on these areas.

Dr. Rittenhouse then left the meeting.

Dr. Johnson asked for direction from Senators on how they wished to proceed.

Dr. L. Bentabet, seconded by Dr. T. Fletcher, proposed the following motion: "Be it resolved that Senate deplores the fact that the Principal did not send his regrets to this meeting and that it therefore considers him to be in contempt of Senate."

Mr. J. Wald asked if it were possible to be sure, in the absence of the Secretary, that the Principal did know about this meeting and did not send his regrets. Dr. V. Faraoni replied that the Secretary did notify all of the Senators by email of this meeting, and he pointed out that the Principal was clearly included in the addresses listed on the email. Dr. Fletcher suggested that, given the importance of the events currently unfolding on campus, the Principal should have seen the importance of sending his regrets and could have easily told someone he would not be able to attend the meeting. Prof. Viens noted that Mr. Jodoin had sent his regrets and had even made arrangements to have the meeting taped in his absence; she argued that the Principal should be held to the same standard.

The motion was put to a vote, and carried with one abstention (20-0-1).

Dr. Johnson suggested that Senate should now focus on the question of how the appointment of an Interim VP Academic would affect the many Senate committees connected to that office.

Dr. Fletcher, seconded by Dr. M. Vigneault, proposed the following motion:

"Whereas the decision of November 19th, 2007, by President Gordon and Principal Poupart has a serious academic impact on the University,

"Be it resolved that Dr. Rittenhouse retain his responsibilities over academic matters to the end of his current mandate, June 30th, 2008."

Mr. J. Wald asked if Senate had the authority to adopt such a motion. Prof. S. Sheeran noted that the appointment of a new Vice-Principal must

be brought before Senate for consultation, and that a change in the academic leadership of the University at this point is bound to have a significant impact on the strategic planning process, which is a bona fide concern of Senate. Dr. V. Faraoni added that, since the appointment of a Vice-Principal requires consultation with Senate, the failure of the Principal and Dr. Gordon to consult Senate on the appointment of the new Interim Vice-Principal is a violation of the RORs. Dr. Johnson said that, by convention, the Senate has the right to consider such a motion.

The motion was put to a vote, and was adopted unanimously (21-0-0).

4. Motion to Adjourn (8:15)

Dr. Johnson asked if there were any other business. Seeing none, he asked for a motion to adjourn. It was moved by Dr. Faraoni, and seconded by Prof. Viens, that the meeting adjourn.

Dr. Andrew Johnson, Chair

Prof. Daron Westman, Secretary