

VPOF defends hookah idea

HOOKAH • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Cunningham noted that very few places in the city offer hookah pipes, and explained he did some research and found a non-tobacco herbal mixture that would circumvent all the City and SU bylaws.

"It's just a very social act, it's on par with having a cup of coffee or a pint of beer with your friends," Cunningham said. "I thought that would kind of create a niche market because, let's face it, coffee shops are a dime a dozen on campus. We need to identify that space as being a little bit different."

Cunningham explained that Powerplant patrons would've been able to sign out a hookah in exchange for their ID and pay by the bowl based on gram weight.

Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) Chair Theresa Chapman said that while Cunningham had mentioned the idea of hookahs to BFC, she only found out that they were actually bought by hearsay and was able to confirm the rumour by reading Exec Committee minutes.

"My first reaction was [that] he's completely out to lunch and I can't believe he just did this on his own.

But my second reaction was wow, it's so crazy, it just might work," Chapman said.

"I still think it's a great idea, there's no question some people have a problem with it but overall I think it'll be a new product that a lot of students would enjoy."

**CHRIS CUNNINGHAM,
SU VP (OPERATIONS & FINANCE)**

Chapman, who saw the purchase of hookahs as "one of the most entertaining things that's happened this year," noted that, even though the Exec Committee didn't agree with Cunningham, the idea was refreshingly out of the box.

"Everybody mentions doing crazy things, like putting strippers in the Powerplant but no one actually goes out and says 'Well, who cares

what anyone thinks I'm going to do it'—not that hookahs are like strippers—but it's just one of those really different ideas.

"I think that's one of the benefits of having someone who's not established in the Students' Union taking an Exec position, because they're not so concerned with the process. And they tend to think of something a little bit different," Chapman added. Cunningham hadn't sat on Council prior to being elected last year.

While plans on how to make the Powerplant profitable are still up in the air, Cunningham is hopeful his idea won't go unnoticed.

"Who knows, if this generates conversation maybe it'll go to Council or the Executive [and] maybe next year's Executive will go through with it," Cunningham said. "I still think it's a great idea, there's no question some people have a problem with it but overall I think it'll be a new product that a lot of students would enjoy."

To read the Executive Committee minutes where the idea of using hookahs in the Powerplant is discussed and later rejected please see: www.thegatewayonline.ca.

Right vote for wrong reasons: Power

Students' Union needs extra funds to continue current services, but Council shouldn't be concentrating on just trying to avoid a deficit, says SU President

BUDGET • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Even though he saw it as an unavoidable measure, Dollansky voted in opposition to the amendment. He argued that Council should've set a specific cap on the amount that fees could increase. He presented a motion to Council that would allow the BFC to raise costs to a maximum of four per cent above CPI, but the amendment was defeated.

"I voted against the principle because of the fact that we didn't put a cap on it," he said. "I think that it was irresponsible—we need to provide direction to BFC to make sure we don't increase fees any higher than we have to."

However, while Tieman agreed with Dollansky that there should be restrictions on how high the fees can rise, he said there was already a bylaw that limits any increases to 15 per cent. Any changes to that restrictions, he argued, could cause problems down the road.

"It would be setting a precedent where Council could be changing that cap at their will, whenever they found it appropriate," Tieman said. "I hope

that the BFC has enough brains in their committee to not raise fees more than four per cent over [CPI]."

"I voted against the principle because of the fact that we didn't put a cap on it."

**STEPHEN DOLLANSKY,
SU COUNCILLOR**

After the amendment was passed, SU President Samantha Power proposed a rare request to reconsider the question. The reasoning behind the motion, she said, was that Council shouldn't be approving a fee increase just to address a deficit.

"If Council feels that [the SU] needs more money to provide students with proper services, then we should increase fees. But I don't think we should be increasing student fees just so that we don't run a deficit," Power

said. "[The motion was] to tell them that they were making the right choice for the wrong reasons."

The motion to reconsider the question was voted on and ultimately rejected by councillors, and the original vote stood.

After considering other amendments, Council eventually approved the budget principles. The BFC will develop a more detailed proposal based on the approved principles and present it to Vice-President (Operations and Finance) Chris Cunningham by today. While the principles are only intended to outline the basic direction of the budget, some councillors, like Justin Kehoe, felt that Council should have done more to provide specifics to the committee.

"[The fee increase] is a political decision to make, and BFC makes the numbers decisions. Council was trying to solve the problem while not making an actual decision," Kehoe said.

Students currently pay \$29.62 per term for SU membership fees.

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March is Liver Health Month and the Canadian Liver Foundation invites you to take a tour of your home using our **Liver Healthy Home Checklist** to see how you can make your home and your daily routines liver healthy.

Check out our website at www.liver.ca.

Please live responsibly!

Fundraising Concert in support of the Canadian Liver Foundation



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