6 NEWS thursday, 5 april, 2007

## COUNCIL FORUM

#### Written by Scott Lilwall

Students' Council meets every second Tuesday in the Council Chambers in University Hall at 6pm. Council meetings are open to all students. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 10 April.

#### **BUDGET TIME**

The first order of business for Students' Council was to vote on the final budget for the 2007/08 year. While student fees will not be increasing, a number of Students' Union businesses will have prices raised to increase revenues. SUBMart, SUBTitles, RATT and Juicy are among the businesses whose prices will increase by an average of five per cent.

The budget has a number of increased expenses, including an added \$2000 to the annual salary of the Students' Union's Chief Returning Officer, and just over \$80 000 to renovate the front counter area of L' Express. The Powerplant, which will be closed over the summer and possibly undergo renovations, is budgeted for a loss of about \$100 000 for the 2007/08 budget, although SU Vice-President (Operations and Finance) Chris Cunningham said that it's impossible to know exactly what the financial situation of the Powerplant will be next year, and that the loss is considered a worst-case scenario. (For more on the Powerplant closure, please see story on front page.)

In the end, the SU budget ran at a deficit of \$24 995 for the 2007/08 year. While usually required to present a balanced budget, Council passed a motion at an earlier meeting that allowed the organization to run a deficit of no more than

\$25 000. The budget passed easily.

#### **CENSURE MOTION**

A motion was brought by Campus Saint Jean Councillor Brittany Bugler and Science Councillor Theresa Chapman that called for Council to censure Cunningham. She cited Cunningham's absence from a number of board meetings for groups receiving dedicated fees. As well, they expressed displeasure with the lateness of the Budget and Finance Committee presenting budget principles to Council arguing that it was Cunningham's responsibility to make sure the principles were ready in due time. Bugler explained that the measure was brought forward not as a punishment, but just to have the concerns expressed in Council

Most councillors expressed that they didn't support the motion, saying that the blame for the late presentation of the principles shouldn't be attributed to Cunningham alone. Science Councillor Sylvia Shamanna suggested an amendment that would extend the censure to the whole BFC, which was defeated by a close vote. The final decision was soundly defeated, with only once councillor voting in favour of the censure.

#### **QUESTION PERIOD**

Question Period was next on the list, with a couple of questions aimed at Vice-President (External) Dave Cournoyer on if the upcoming U-Pass would be eligible for a federal income tax refund and when the program would be put in place. Cournoyer confirmed that the U-Pass would be eligible for a tax refund, and that the transit pass would be ready to go by 1 September.

Arts Councillor Al-Amyn Sumar, who sported a Calgary Flames jersey, was asked when he was going planning to change out of the offending colours.

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**COUNCIL CONTROVERSY** Councillor Bugler (left) criticized VP (Operations and Finance) Cunningham's performance.

Sumar scolded Edmonton fans for being fair-weather fans and noted that his "Mommy likes it." In the end, however, the Flames lost 4–3 to the Colorado Avalanche, and Sumar presumably spend the rest of the evening in tears.

Councillor Steven Dollansky was asked how the search for next year's CRO and Speaker were going, as both positions will be empty at the end of this year. Dollansky said that neither position had an abundance of applicants so far, and that the positions would be advertised heavily in an effort to "touch as many people as we can." Council collectively twittered.

#### LIGHTNING ROUND

A slew of political policies were then tackled by Council. Second readings for the Research policy, which directed the

SU to advocate undergraduate studies as being as high a priority for the University as research is, and the Capital Projects-Student Fees policy, which expresses the opinion that tuition shouldn't be used to fund capital projects, were both passed with little debate.

A policy that would lobby the University to look into ways to make housing more affordable students was subject to a few wording amendments, as Board of Governors Representitive Chris Samuel said the previous form, which he wrote, seemed like it was "written by a retarded orangutang." After the problem was rectified, the policy passed.

Cournoyer then brought forward a policy proposal that would call on the University to develop a predictable tuition policy that made postsecondary

education possible for anyone and that recognizes that tuition is only one of many costs associated with education. He then invited anyone who opposed the measure to take it up with his two friends, as he pulled out Spider-Man and the Incredible Hulk action figures and made exaggerated grunting noises. A clearly intimidated Council passed the policy by a wide margin.

Two more polices were debated. One that directed Council to lobby against any further increases to the International Differential, which is paid by international students, was passed without little opposition. So too was a measure to encourage the SU to become more environmentally friendly and would direct it to encourage the University to do the same.

Council then adjourned for the night.

