



THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

AMS Student Society
6138 SUB Boulevard
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1
www.ams.ubc.ca

BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION GOVERNANCE BOARD (BAGB)
Minutes of October 28, 2013

Attendance

Present:

Student Board Members: Erik MacKinnon (Chair), Graeme Nixon, Philip Edgcumbe, Samina Ullah (arrived 8:50 pm)

Alumni Board Members: David Borins (left 8:30), Carol Leacy (arrived 6:20)

Ex Officio, non-voting: Caroline Wong (AMS President, arrived 7:55), Joaquin Acevedo (AMS VP Finance)

Staff Present: Ross Horton (General Manager), Uli Laue (Director of Operations), Keith Hester (Director of Finance), Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist)

Regrets: Mark Fraser,

Recording Secretary: Sheldon Goldfarb

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm in SUB Room 213.

Minutes

The minutes of September 17 and October 10 were approved (with corrections) by consensus.

Boom!Pizza Part One

- Joaquin:



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- People on the Executive are not thrilled with the move from Pie R Squared to Boom!Pizza. We had the consultants redo their presentation for Boom, but even then we were still thinking we should look at returning to Pie R.
- It would put us a month behind and cost \$5,000.
- We asked Council, and it was suggested we consult with BAGB and the New SUB Committee.
- It was agreed to discuss this in more detail later in the meeting.

[Carol arrived.]

Why Are Our Businesses Here? Part One

- Erik:
 - We want our business staff to be able to go away from this and create a strategic plan, which Council will then approve and which will serve as a guide on how to open a business, rebrand a business, handle staffing (students versus non-students), etc.
 - Our policies are to put boundaries on how we operate.
 - Our approach is Nose In, Hands Out.
- Brainstorming session on what BAGB members like and don't like about businesses in general: lists of qualities on both sides were compiled. This led into a more specific discussion about AMS businesses.
- Erik: The AMS is not trying hard enough to get my money, e.g., through discounts.
- Graeme asked about rewards and incentive programs.
- Sheldon: Do we ask students about the quality of our products?



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- Carol: Talking to our customers.
- Erik: Are we checking Yelp?
- Ross: We tend to have decent quality, large portions, competitive prices.
- Erik: Service is good, not great.
- Joaquin: Passion is lacking.
- Erik: We say we have the cheapest beer west of Granville. The problem is, people here have and spend money. Should our value proposition really be, We're cheap? Or should it be: You own us.
- David: Hard to convey that message (of ownership). People want good quality. We need to assess: are they driven by cheap prices or by quality?
- Ross: There's been pressure in the past to keep prices low.
- David: In the new SUB you can mix it up a bit; there will be more places where you can spend more.
- Ross: One, the Perch. The rest are still to feed people inexpensively.
- Uli: Venue look and feel affects what you charge. In the old Pit, \$5 would be too much. In the new Pit, because of the value of the atmosphere, it could be \$7.
- Ross: We can't raise prices a lot.
- Graeme: Do the outlets have promises that they are to uphold?
- Ross: In the new SUB we want people to feel comfortable; we want to be welcoming.
- Uli: There's something to that: each outlet in the new SUB to have a vision.
- Sheldon: New staff tend to be less knowledgeable.



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- Ross: Consistency goes down with inexperienced staff and outside core hours. Hiring students leads to high turnover. We could hire fewer students and more permanent staff who would be consistent, knowledgeable.
- Graeme asked what the current proportion is: student hours versus full-time hours.
- Uli: Hard to know. Maybe 50-50.
- Erik: Are we cool, sexy? Not now perhaps, but should that be a goal?
- Erik: How much should staff be empowered? What about if front line staff are not experienced? You don't want them deciding to give away free fries. But you want a solutions-oriented approach.
- Ross: If lines are huge, if we seem too busy, then that makes us not approachable.

Boom!Pizza Part Two

- Ross:
 - Branding for the new building developed over several months.
 - There was a presentation to Council in November 2011. Feedback was sought, but there was no formal Council resolution to approve the new names.
 - The New SUB Committee approved the names in February 2012.
 - The only name that made people squirm was the one for the pizza place.
 - In general the idea was to have new brands for the new building.
 - Even staff were uncomfortable with letting go of Pie R. In general they were okay with the new branding, but Boom made people feel uncomfortable. Some people really don't like it (though some do).



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- Some people don't understand why we changed at all, and some really don't like the new name. The Ubysey said it was silly.
- Last year's Executive said they weren't sure they liked it.
- A majority of this year's Executive are in the I Can't Stand That Name camp.
- Originally, there were workshops to discuss the nature of each business. Those gave direction to Glasfurd & Walker, but the workshops didn't say to change or not change the names.
- Joaquin: The name is a centre of mockery. I personally think Boom is a really bad name, and why change Pie R? I think it has a lot of brand equity. Some people don't think a name like Boom belongs on a university campus. I don't think it's a good direction for the AMS. It's not necessarily best to change everything.
- Carol: If we go with Boom and someone else opens a Pie R Squared, would we care?
- Graeme: It would initially be confusing.
- Sheldon: There's a parallel with Duke's Cookies, which was in the SUB for years. We replaced it with Blue Chip. Who still remembers Duke's? After a few years it doesn't matter.
- Uli: Only the Pit has brand equity. Nobody will care what name we give the pizza place.

[Caroline arrives 7:55.]

- David:



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- There was a clear decision made a while ago to have a new SUB with new architecture, new businesses, new names. I wonder how wise it is to revisit that.
- I don't think from a business perspective it makes a difference what you call the pizza place. People will know it serves pizza. (I kind of like the name Boom.)
- If this committee says keep Pie R Squared, it will be acting against Council's decision not to get involved in business decisions; the idea was to trust the staff and the hired professional advisors. There's a level of micro-managing here. It's not a fundamental issue.
- Carol: If we reopen for this name, why not for every one?
- Joaquin: This is the one name everyone had a problem with. Council never actively decided on this name. BAGB wasn't around then.
- Erik: I don't feel qualified to rebrand a business. I don't think anyone at Council is. Can any board of directors do this? That's why we delegated to experts.
- Joaquin: But the Council is the owner.
- David: Were there Council motions to approve current names? The moon was just the personal choice of an Executive.
- Sheldon: I'd have to check Council minutes. I know in some cases there were competitions.
- David: Should Council be bogged down in minutiae?
- Graeme: Are there changes to the pizzas being served? If it's still Pie R, but the pizzas are different, people may be upset.
- Uli: Glasfurd & Walker have designed interiors for Boom, for that feel. As to keeping the name but changing the product, changes happen anyway.
- Joaquin: Did the consultant report on the impact of the interior design?



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- Ross:
 - Glasfurd & Walker feel they would have done the design differently with a different name. It's too late to change that. We're only a year out, and we're getting pushback on older changes. Rob Brown is saying no more changes.
 - If we did change the design, it could cost \$50,000 to \$100,000.
 - I'm not concerned about a huge clash between Pie R and the design.
- Carol: What about a third option? Not Boom, not Pie R. We could ask for a new name that fits the design. If you change the design, there's a huge impact. If you only change the name, there's less.
- Erik: What's the exact dollar cost of changing the name?
- Ross: Only \$5,000.
- Erik: If we keep the design and change the name, do Glasfurd & Walker see a clash? Will it work?
- Joaquin: UBC rejected its consultant's recommendation for the name of Vantage College. Experts are not always right.
- Uli: Is Boom really generally disliked? What does that mean? Some don't like it, some do, some are neutral. Have we received lots of emails? Is this just based on the Ubysey article?
- Joaquin: We really don't like Boom, and we like Pie R.
- Philip: How much would it cost to go to Boom!Pizza and find out it doesn't work and then go back to Pie R a year out?
- Ross: Way more than \$5,000. Signage etc.
- Caroline: It's not about the experts; it's the students.



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- Erik: Have we asked the students? Ask them, What's the name of the pizza place in the SUB? See how many know. Why was there no naming competition like for earlier business names?
- David: People were criticizing a lot of the names a while ago, not just Boom.
- Erik: The Honour Roll: I was surprised that was going.
- David: Are we holding onto names or going to new names? The decision has been made.
- Joaquin: There was some opposition to other names, e.g., Peco Peco, but Boom had the most.
- Ross: I would rather go back to Pie R than reopen the whole naming process for the pizza place; it would take too much time and money and energy, and might open up all the business names. It's the wrong thing to do to make this change now, but if we are, then we should just go to Pie R.
- Graeme: From a business standpoint, I don't think it makes a difference: Boom versus Pie R. For students, if the decision was made without student input ...
- David: A lot of the debate is being driven by the newspaper. This is capitulating to the Ubysey, a small vocal minority.

MOVED GRAEME, SECONDED CAROL:

“That AMS BAGB recommends that we remain with the original New SUB branding recommendations made by Glasfurd & Walker.”



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- Graeme: I love Pie R Squared. Love the name. But the amount of effort to validate that it's the most popular name, to find out what students want ... it would take too long. In four years no one will know, just like Duke's Cookies.
- Caroline: We don't create a new SUB every year. We have heard rumblings against Boom since it was proposed. Why settle for Boom!Pizza?
- David: This is only a recommendation. If Council feels strongly about it, they should do what they want to do. If you provide managers with the responsibility and they retain professionals, and for a number of years there doesn't seem to be a problem, then ...
- Carol: This is purely a business recommendation, but that doesn't mean emotion can't override it.

[David leaves.]

- Erik: I don't like the directors becoming micro on this. Will BAGB be asked to do lots of other changes in the new SUB?
- Graeme: I don't understand the magnitude of the dislike for Boom.

MOVED GRAEME, SECONDED CAROL:

“That AMS BAGB recommends that we remain with the original New SUB branding recommendations made by Glasfurd & Walker.”

... Carried unanimously

Why Are Our Businesses Here? Part Two

- Erik: This is to empower staff to create strategy.



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- The discussion resumed on the ideas generated earlier.
- Graeme: Re the idea that the customer is Number 1: What do we sacrifice to make the customer Number 1?
- Uli: Market forces versus core values. Are we going to have healthy products? What if the students want French fries?

[Samina arrives.]

- Question about the role of ethics. Why don't we have a fair wage policy?
- Uli: We used to pay more than minimum wage, then the wage was raised, and our economics don't allow a raise now.
- Ross: We don't make a contribution if we pay \$17 an hour.
- Samina: Who are we contributing to? Just at UBC? Ethical purchasing has effects outside UBC.
- Erik: The philosophical issue is, What are the businesses for? Is it to get the maximum amount of money? Or to employ X number of students?
- Uli: Council may want to define this: student employment and a reasonable amount of proceeds.
- Samina: Is profitability a benchmark? What about worker satisfaction and learning opportunities for students?
- Philip: Until now we've been talking mostly about the customer-facing side for employees, the customer service perspective. We haven't looked at the management/operations perspective.
- Joaquin: Sustainability versus the market.
- **Action Item: Erik to put all these ideas into a document and circulate it. Then to Council. BAGB to get direction from Council and build on that.**



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BAGB Applications

- Joaquin: Postings have closed. Looking through applications. May reopen.

Upcoming Business

- November meeting will focus on businesses in the new SUB.
- Whistler: We received permission from Council to pursue the two options, and we'll ask Council to allocate money for an update of the Coriolis report.
- Ross: Should it be Coriolis or should we just speak to a realtor?
- Carol: The key is what is the land worth? Go to a realtor.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.