

ST. CATHERINE'S COLLEGE MIDDLE COMMON ROOM OPEN MEETING MINUTES

October 23rd 2022 6PM MCR
Committee Members Present

Co-Presidents: Lucy Bartel and Sam Atwal

Secretary: Felice Wallner

Social Secretaries: Jeremy Sontchi, Ilayda Karadag

Minutes Taken by Felice Wallner

A. MINUTES

Meeting opened at 18:45

Sam Atwal: General Introduction, announcing Diwali party and Halloween BOP, explanation of Open Meetings to Freshers

1. Approval of minutes from the previous Open Meeting (May 28th 2022)

These will be approved in the next Open Meeting, as the minutes could not be distributed on time due to tech issues.

2. Info from the Committee

Jeremy Sontchi: Explanations on MCR matters such as bar opening times and noise levels

JS: The bar can be opened by bar officers if there are two. The main rule is to stop serving at midnight, this is also the cutoff for noise. The exceptions are pre-approved parties (such as BOPs), for which a 1:30 rule applies. Best thing to do for noise complaints is calling the porters lodge who will ask the group responsible to turn it down.

3. Approval of Associate and Honorary MCR Members

Felice Wallner: The MCR offers Associate and Honorary Membership to Alumni and long-term partners of MCR members. These are approved and put into receipt on a termly basis. Memberships have already been processed for Michaelmas Term and must be approved retroactively. The reason why the memberships had to be approved before an Open Meeting is because individuals are charged for an entire term and it would be unfair to make them wait until Week 3-4 to get access to the MCR.

No questions

Vote: Motion passed unanimously

4. Election of Benjamin Wagenvoort as Honorary MCR Member

Motion proposed by: John Kainer and Michael Hinz

Seconded by Arunima Cheruvathoor

Will Benjamin Wagenvoort become an honorary member of St Catherine's College MCR [Y/N/A].

St Catz MCR is allowed to choose two persons who are not members of the college to become honorary members each year. There are two criteria, the fulfilment of either of which can make a person eligible to become an honorary member: achievements in life or service on the MCR's executive committee. Benjamin has served on the MCR executive committee as the treasurer but is no longer a member of St Catherine's college. I think that he should be granted honorary membership in virtue of the continued help that he provides to the MCR committee and the general community. Moreover, he remains an active participant in life at Catz, and visits the college almost every day.

No questions

Vote: Motion passed unanimously

5. MCR Committee elections

i. Co-presidents

Candidates: Felice Wallner and Jeremy Sontchi

Seconded by (respectively): John Kainer and Michael Hinz, Sara Rotenberg and Azizia Wahedi

FW & JS: introduction, both have been on the committee the past year, both would like to continue their work for the MCR community

SA: How would you deal with conflict within the wider MCR community and within the committee?

FW: important thing to keep in mind is that everyone has a lot going on, even if they don't let on that much, the key thing is consistent and good communication, the committee and wider community is like a family, conflict may well happen but it is important to resolve these in a respectful and open manner

JS: it is important to communicate efficiently and not allow grudges to get in the way of coexisting at Catz, communication is key, within the committee as in the wider grad community as well

ii. Secretary

Candidate: Laurence Peinturier

Seconded by: Vaibhav Mahajan and Hannah Geddes

LP: introduction, reason for running: we received a lot of support and I want to support that, the role is very polyvalent, and F set the bar very high, but I would love to do my part in supporting you through your time at Catz

SA: What do you think are important qualities of a Secretary?

LP: being supportive and clear and concise communication

SA: How do you stay organized when times get busy?

LP: become more organized and efficient as my workload and stress increased and think that will be the same for this position

iii. Treasurer

Candidate: Maximilian Langefeld

Seconders: Pierfrancesco Lapolla Losasso and Bozhen Zhang

ML: Introduction, budgeting has always played a key role in art history because it is so underfunded, managed the collection funds of the MoMa, will keep track of the budget and will reimburse efficiently but diligently for any approved expenditures

SA: what do you think is the most challenging part of budgeting?

ML: Multitasking, making sure I have enough time to do a good job but also working efficiently

SA: What has been your biggest success at being in the role of treasurer?

ML: nerding out about research projects and working for the MoMa

SA: How do you handle stress?

ML: I do yoga once a week and I may take up mindfulness practices

JS: How would you go about setting a budget and saying no to expenditures that go over?

ML: BW has set a good precedent, will follow that, committee members have to know what they need for an event or item, and will approve or say no

G: How would you go about discussing with college if they want to cut down on our funding?

ML: We really need it. Show college that we make strategically good investments and that we do spend the budget

EB: How would you go about allocating budget to individual committee members?

ML: Committee members should come up with an approximate budget (with planned events) at the beginning of term and we will work on a way together to make it fit into the overall budget

EB: From the outside looking in, what would you want to do differently this year?

ML: More options for the brunches (savory, themed, etc), investing in better gym equipment, professional DJs and more performances and acts for our large parties

iv. IT Officer:

Candidate: Ryan Benschop

Second: Michael Hinz and Jamal Dumas

RB: introduction, built many websites and apps (IOS based) for various clients and really enjoys working on projects that serve a community

SA: how would you communicate tech jargon to someone not tech savvy at all like me?

RB: communication communication communication, get to their level and go from there

RH: which languages are you proficient in?

RB: Python, MATLAB, CSS, HTML, Javascript (and many more)

EB: Would you consider making an MCR app

RB: would definitely if people wanted it and I am in a position to do it

IV: You will have to work together with the College IT Officer – how are your conflict management skills?

RB: Generally, it is a give and take, many things are outdated and are in need of updating

v. Social secretaries:

Candidates: Michael Hinz and Vaibhav (Web) Mahajan

Seconders (respectively): Alessandro Guarnieri and Xinran He, Hannah Geddes and Laurence Peinturier

MH: introduction, been to many events and guest dinners, would use my connections to blackmail my friends into giving us great exchange dinners

WM: introduction, have had a lot of fun and want to give back and organize an exciting year, ideas for drinking events: Ou et la poulet etc, Non-drinking events: BBQ, was a social sec in undergrad as well, hope to be your next fun dad

SA: how do you stay organized?

WM: Look ahead and make sure that you know what needs to be done until then

MH: make many small sub tasks and keep track of those

SA: When was the last time you had to deal with last minute changes?

Silence - JS: Michael is German, plans don't change

WM: faulty tech equipment, realized that I just need to be on top of people non-stop

MH: German weather, last minute change for an outdoor event to be moved indoors

TH: a lot of tech involved in large scale BOPS. How comfortable are you with setting up that kind of tech?

WM: I have never worked with lights before, but I would definitely make sure I know what to do by asking you before an event

TH: ideas for how to keep people involved with events and create Catz traditions that have longevity?

MH: They have to be planned well ahead of time, get the MCR's opinion on what to do

WM: I would like to think I am a good blackmailer to get people to come

EOD: Thoughts on a college wide beer pong tournament?

MH: I am down

RA: Do you see any way of improving the MCRs catering for the wider community? Many events are geared towards 10-15 people going to a specific place.

JS: Colleges by general rule will only exchange 15 people. At Catz we tried with college to increase the numbers of our guest dinner, but they were rejected due to understaffing.

IK: Money is often lost by the MCR because we ask for tentative numbers of people interested who end up not coming, Is there anything you as incoming social secs would do to counteract?

MH: Remind them personally by email as in hey look what we bought for this event and for you

WM: Again, blackmail (note: said ironically, expression was followed by general light laughter in the MCR)

VK (online): How would you deal with variability for guest dinners?

MH: as long as we don't have more covid, then hopefully we can keep numbers up for the guest dinners and fill the waiting list, in essence: not much more of a problem than last year, Hilary will always be a little less busy because it is an academically intense few weeks

vi. LGBTQ Officer

Candidate: Philomena Leahy

Seconders: Isabel Ahme and Lucy Scammel

Note: the circulated agenda announces Mena and Juan to both be running for LGBTQ Rep, this contested candidacy was resolved before the meeting and Juan self-nominated for male welfare rep so both could be part of the welfare team

PL: introduction, understand the difficulties that come with identifying within the community, big fan of welfare brunches, welfare brunches but also specialist LGBTQ nights with speakers, have experience with trauma training due to working on a helpline

SA: How do you handle failure?

PL: failure is a big part of life, it's important to remember that it takes many failures for one success – vicarious resilience.

LB (online): would you undergo peer supporter training?

PL: yes definitely, I would be up for helping others in a more structured and informed manner

IV: What are your ideas for LGBTQ friendly social events?

PL: out dinner drinks, going for lunch together, following in those pages and make sure that everyone is aware of those things happening

vii. Womens' Welfare Rep

Candidate: Elizabeth Onishemo

Seconders: Bolawa Tejuosu and Louis Le Merle

EO: introduction, background of investment banking, used to working under high pressure

EB: The MBA is a very demanding course, could you juggle that and a committee position and be here for all the welfare events?

E: This is the only position applied for within the Oxford societies and intends to be able to fulfill duties

viii. Mens' Welfare Rep

Candidate: Juan Sand Valencia

Seconders: Philomena Leahy and Michael Hinz

JSV: introduction, being here and experiencing the changes is difficult, and I want to be here for people going through those changes and help with conflict resolution, will be one of the first male officers, many times men are afraid of being vulnerable and I want to be that confidential voice

SA: Consent workshops? And waffles?

JSV: Definitely open to doing that and I make great waffles

PS: What do you think went wrong so why was the position vacant for so many year?

JSV: males are not as open to welfare positions, we live in a society that makes those kinds of conversations difficult, I was part of an NGO where I was working to give a community access to water, which involved talking to the community and deriving needs (women are the main water fetching force but the men have a lot of old fashioned opinions that need to be heard and worked around)

IV: is there anything new that you would like to bring to the role?

JSV: open to hear from the community and see what the MCR wants

SA: How do you think you can include welfare specifically for men?

JSV: by creating a specific channel for men

ix. Catz House Rep

Candidate: Katy Degtiareva

Seconders: Paul Schmitt and Dasom Hong

KD: introduction, we need a common space in Catz house, plan days by hours, have experience organizing refugee work from the Ukraine and Russia into Serbia where I was in charge of human resources and logistics, promise to hear everyone out in Catz house and make our lives there better

SA: What do you wish to approve in Catz house?

KD: the common space, a common barbeque, socials for catz house

TH: It's a two-way street, how would you make the wider catz community aware of catz house

KD: Organize actual trips together to main college and to Catz House, founding the group chat

IK: Do you have any ideas how to involve people who are not even in Catz accommodation?

KD: pub crawls in Cowley

x. Tea and Biscuits Officer

Candidate: Jake Reeves

Seconders: Bobby Gould and Aimee Moran

JR: introduction, I really like tea and biscuits

SA: What's your favorite tea and biscuit?

JR: earl grey and rich tea biscuits (*note: the biscuit preference incited mild outrage in those present*)

TH: Tea and biscuits officer has been implemented some time ago, we now have a coffee machine which has some logistics, what is your willingness to take on maintenance of this?

JR: I'm sure we have a manual on this somewhere, can figure that out and take that in too

JS: Are you available to help with other events as well? And can you place an order

JR: Yes and yes

The votes were counted by secret ballot by Sam Atwal and Eboni Bucknor, results will be posted once the online voting has closed and counted

6. Any other business

The matter below was handed in to FW 15 minutes before the meeting as a motion by TH. Two other motions were handed in alongside, which were vetoed by

unanimous decision of the executive committee present due to reasons stated in the MCR Consitution (version 2021) Section g. iv.

TH: Exploring the option of a Coffee Officer positions

TH: The coffee machine requires some logistics to its operation, such as cleaning, descaling and filter exchanges, we also have a milk frother now as of past summer, which requires more hands on maintenance

EB: what does the milk frother need exactly?

TH: Cleaning needs to happen daily, have two cannisters, one clean one dirty, soapy water is run through the nozzle and cannister via the pump system and left to dry while the other one is in use, sterilizing liquid in cannister to wash out, milk must be exchanged daily

JS: this is a lot to put on a full time student potentially not even living on site, is having the milk frother really a good idea?

TH: we have a great coffee machine, and just pouring cold milk on a great coffee is a shame

Vote: Yes or no to exploring the possibility of an additional coffee officer?

Show of hands: 15 for and 7 against exploring the possibility of a coffee officer

Meeting adjourned 8:30PM