

# **RHODES UNIVERSITY STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2020  
AT 18: 45 IN STEVE BIKO SEMINAR ROOM 2, RHODES UNIVERSITY  
(MEETING STARTED 15 MINUTES LATE BECAUSE RA ROOM KEYS  
WERE NOT AVAILABLE)**

**Present:** President, Vice President, Secretary General, Treasurer General, International Affairs Councillor, Environmental Councillor, Community Engagement Councillor, Activism & Transformation Councillor.

**Apologies (Excused):** Projects Manager, Academic Councillor, Media Councillor.

**Absent:** Oppidan Councillor, Residence Councillor.

## **I. Call to order**

President asked Madame International to close in prayer. Madame President called to order the regular meeting of the Student Representative Council at 18:30 on 17 February 2020 at Seminar Room 2, Steve Biko Building.

## **II. Roll call**

President asked for confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting. President conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: President, Vice President, Secretary General, Treasurer General, International Affairs Councillor, Transformation and Activism Councillor, Environmental Councillor, Community Engagement Councillor, and SRC Students Development and Support Officer (who was excused after Agenda IV).

### **III. Confirmation of minutes of the previous meeting**

President asked for confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting. Activism & Transformation Councillor proposed and Treasurer General seconded. Minutes of last meeting approve.

### **IV. Student Development and Support Officer**

- i) Mr Ofei urged council to finalize the overdue year plan. Year plan should be available by the first Students Services meeting.
- ii) Mr. Ofei expressed that he would like to be kept in the loop, to receive the minutes after the meeting, but for the Secretary General to briefly share what was discussed whilst minutes are being compiled.
- iii) Mr. Ofei advised that during council meetings SRC representation in committee meetings be discussed before the representatives go for the meetings. This is so that when Councillors attend their allocated committee meetings, the SRC is adequately represented. Mr. Ofei also asked that committee meeting allocations should be completed ASAP
- iv) Mr. Ofei mentioned that Societies Chairs Training went well.
- v) Mr. Ofei implored council to encourage students staying in halls without SRC hall representatives to fill the vacant hall reps positions.
- vi) In relation to the proposed Leadership Week, Mr. Ofei suggested that if the council plans to invite high profile guests, planning needs to begin as soon as possible this week to get the ball rolling.
- vii) Mr. Ofei commended council on working on the mentorship document on time.
- viii) Mr. Ofei was excused from the meeting at 18:57.

b) **Year Plan**

The Vice President confirmed that the objectives have been submitted. At this point budget just needs to be allocated to the planned projects. VP will send an outline to councillors on how it will be done, and which councillors can fill in.

c) **Office Hours**

- i) Secretary General shared feedback from meeting with Mr. Ofei. Mr. Ofei inquired as to when council members will be in the office. He understands that council would like to operate on appointment basis, however he advised that this may not be entirely feasible as there will still be student walk-ins. On this advice, Secretary General requested that council send their office hours and expressed her appreciation for those members who had already sent these in.
- ii) The Secretary General clarified, that those whose timetables were not yet finalized could hand those in when they were available.
- iii) The purple room that some members have been assigned as an office is still being cleaned and organized. Madame Secretary-General said a request had been put in for the carpets to be cleaned.
- iv) There are no working computers in the purple room. An email has been sent to Mrs. Kivitts, the Financial Administrator, who oversees such requests for computers for the Purple Room. In conclusion, computers have been requested for the Purple Room.

d) **Transcripts and Letter of completion feedback**

- i) The Secretary-General sent an email to Mr. Ishmael Mnisi, the Media Liaison Officer in the office of the Minister of DHET, who confirmed that an email to the University on the outcome of the meeting with SAUS was sent. The university is aware that they must give students transcripts whether a student is owing fees or not.

- ii) A question was raised as to whether the President would follow up this point to the DVC.
- iii) To this question Madame President responded that 3 items were added on Sunday to the agenda items although they do not appear on the emailed agenda items, they form part of the agenda items. This was due to a miscommunication in meeting dates.
- e) **Feedback from Madame President's meeting with the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Academic and Student Affairs.**
  - i) Was its own agenda item, as number 6 but due to link with item C above brought up
    - (1) Transcripts and Letters of Completion:
      - (a) The DVC discussed with management, the Registrar, the Vice Chancellor and others.
      - (b) The DVC says the communication they received did not say exactly what the media communication said.
      - (c) For purposes of job appointments, according to the university, the university will send a letter of completion to the company.
      - (d) Transcripts are withheld to encourage debtors to pay.
        - (i) Madame President reiterated that the letter of completion is still being charged. Proposed to council whether they should take this issue up.
        - (ii) Resolution: As this same issue has been dealt with in previous years, the council will look at minutes from 2019 SRC and see what their argument was and any agreements they made with management. To also look at documents showing costs charged for letters of completion. The communication the university received, the media communication sent to the

public as well as confirmation from SAUS will be compared against each other to see if there are any contradictions. Having looked at all these to then pursue negotiations with management.

(iii) This proposal was adopted.

(2) Late Registration

- (a) Charge of R1500 for late registration.
- (b) The question from Madame President was whether it applied to students awaiting feedback for academic appeals, postgraduate students and to international students.
- (c) Feedback from the DVC was that the late registration fee was done on a case by case basis. That the reasons are looked, if it's not the student's fault, then student will not be charged. If the student merely arrives late, they will be charged.
- (d) Madame President did not raise the issue of whether the fee applies to international students with visa issues but confirmed that she would take it up with the DVC and email the Registrar as well.

(3) Communication to DVC

- (a) The SRC had been taking on a lot of application queries increasing their workload. The DVC apologized for this; they were not aware of this as they were equally swamped.

- f) **Institute for Equity and Institutional Culture (IEIC) Meeting**
- i) Madame Transformation received the communication of the IEIC meeting tomorrow 18 February 2020 late. It turned out that Madame Transformation must give an SRC report on student matters.
  - ii) Madame Transformation has sent out a communication to Transformation Reps for them to share any matters or issues to compile these in her report.
  - iii) Madame Transformation requested that council members assist her with this by sharing any issues with her via e-mail. She explained that the type of issues that IEIC deals with include mobility; elevators; lifts and proper access.
  - iv) There was confusion in the room as to whether transformation reps were trained at all or trained any little, and the effect of clashes that some reps with combined portfolios have.
  - v) Madame Transformation confirmed that they do get trained. However, in some halls they are not included in house committee officially and are not accommodated during training week.
  - vi) A proposal was put forward for transformation reps to have training during a weekend, for a whole Saturday.
  - vii) Going forward the council should investigate and avoid clashes with the programme. The problem with the IEIC office was that they were not following the programme and thus creating clashes.

- g) **Student Parliament**
- i) Postponed to next Tuesday 25 February 2020 as key elections not yet completed. A communication has been sent out to relevant departments to fill these roles by Friday, in this way session will be quorate on Tuesday.
- h) **Feedback from UPM meetings**
- i) Mr. Vice President explained that Madame Secretary General, Mr. Projects Manager and himself attended the UPM Meeting.
- ii) The UPM intends to hold a total shutdown this Thursday the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2020. Mr. Vice President and the two council members above, attended the meeting in order to gain clarity on what the UPM wanted from the SRC and Rhodes students.
- iii) The High Court judgment to dissolve Makana Municipality council was discussed. The Premier and MEC failed to dissolve Makana council, and the judgment is in fact on appeal. It was stated the latter judgment was now precedent setting judgment, and every major struggle post-1994 has been won in court. It was also discussed that the unemployment rate in Makana is currently 67% - 69%.
- iv) The UPM requested the students' support as they are equally affected by Makana council's failures paying for resources the government should provide. The shutdown is intended to be for the whole day. The UPM explained that they have written to the MEC and expect the Premier to come and respond to their demands. They insist that it will be a peaceful demonstration.
- v) Mr. Vice President raised his concern as to the absence of the Taxi Associations and Workers' Unions. As this raised question as whether the proposed total shutdown would indeed be a total shutdown. He had

asked in the meeting that another meeting be called in which they should be present. He urged that the shutdown should be for everyone. He also explained that students will not be at the forefront of this demonstration, they would be there in their capacity as Makhanda residents only, should they attend. Students would not participate at the forefront if all stakeholders were not participating in the total shutdown. He was concerned that this should not jeopardize the Rhodes student body. Mr. Vice President expressed to SRC members present, that he felt that the UPM were not entirely organized and wanted the students at the forefront as a photo-op moment. Mr. Vice President was concerned that they did not appear to be organized or have a plan for a way forward.

- vi) Council resolved that as a way forward, they would wait for the second meeting being held by the UPM tomorrow, 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 15:00. If stakeholders are not buying, then the SRC would not buy in on behalf the students. Madame Environmental said she would attend, Madame President asked Madame Environmental to propose the SRC's suggestion that several attempts to communicate with the Premier be made first before a demonstration is organized.

## **V. New business**

- a) Introduction of Minute Taker: Kundai Jimu
- b) Introduction of Council to Minute Taker
- c) Training of society chairs
- i) Madame International requested the council to assist her with capturing the records of the society chairs training as she needs to compile the floor plan for up-coming Sign-Ups evening this Wednesday 19 February 2020. She requests that members return this as soon as appeal. Registers were divided amongst members present and members agreed to capture the records and send them to Madame International as soon as possible.



- ii) Societies Training went fine and there were no issues.
- iii) Need to convene societies council meetings to elect Societies Council Exec and Societies Chair. Madame International also asked whether the Chair needed to be elected by the time of the first Student Parliament session.
- iv) Mr. Vice President clarified that this would not be necessary, as all 10 members of Societies Council exec would have to be present in Student Parliament.
- v) Madame Transformation inquired how the training registers records should be compiled.
- vi) Madame International requested that they be done in a spreadsheet.
- d) Societies and Sports sign ups due to take place this Thursday the 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2020
- i) Madame International is compiling the floor plan for Sign-Ups. The deadline is Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

## **VI. Adjournment**

President asked Madame International to close in prayer. Madame President adjourned the meeting at 20:45.

Minutes typed and submitted by: Kundai Jimu (Minute taker)

Minutes corrected and approved by: Shanti Khosa (SRC Secretary General)