

Minutes of the 1331<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Hart House Board of Stewards held on Thursday, September 14, 2023, in-person at the Burwash Room in Hart House and virtually via Zoom Video Conferencing.

**Present:****Voting Members:**

Shanti Dhoré (APUS Representative)  
Beth Ali (Presidential Appointee)  
Jacky Yu (Steward, Student Literary and Library Committee)  
Robert Fisher (Steward, Community Members Committee)  
Riddhi Sahaye (Steward, Student Social Justice Committee)  
David Kim (Warden)  
David Newman (Presidential [ex-officio] Designate)  
Lucas Olmstead (Steward, Finance Committee)  
Ruth Alemayehu (UTMSU Representative)  
Nadia Rosemond (Presidential Appointee)  
Jaime Sit (Steward, Recreation, Athletics, and Wellness Committee)  
Samara Tower (Steward, Student Theatre Committee)  
Tyus Kalanyos (Steward, Student Debates and Dialogue Committee)  
Yehjeen Cha (Art Committee, Steward Substitute)  
Aidan Thompson (UTSU Representative)  
Afsana Miah (SCSU Representative)

**Non-Voting Members:**

Ikeade Adekale (Recording Secretary)  
Terry Gardiner (Chair)

**Guests:**

Michelle Brownrigg (Senior Director and Chief Program Officer)  
Davina Chan (Senior Director & Chief Marketing Officer)  
Sherry Kulman (Chief Administrative Officer)  
Gillian Lewis (Education and Production Coordinator)  
Aron Mohr (Director, Hospitality Services)  
Amanda Greener (Director, Staff and Community Relations, Staff and Professional Development)  
Stan Xiao (Director, of Finance)  
Jenifer Newcombe (Director, Strategic Initiatives)  
Jiaqi Sun (Co-Chair Committee on Budgets)  
Nicholas Auyang (Co-Chair Committee on Budgets)  
Gurjinder Gill (Incoming Treasurer, Community Members Committee)

**Regrets:**

Victoria Lee (Steward, Art Committee)  
Neelofar Ahmed (GSU Representative)  
Arjun Yanglem (Steward, Student Farm Committee)  
Yihang Xu (Steward, Music Committee)

**1. Welcome, Land Acknowledgement and Introductions** (Lucas Olmstead, Steward, Finance Committee and Terry Gardiner, Chair)

Terry Gardiner (Chair) opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the 1331<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Board of Stewards. Lucas Olmstead provided the land acknowledgment.

**2. Approval of the 1331<sup>st</sup> Meeting Agenda** (Terry Gardiner, Chair)

The Chair asked if there were any amendments to be made to the agenda.

Lucas Olmstead (Steward, Finance Committee) made a motion to amend the agenda: move item #5 on the agenda (Presentation on the 2023-24 Committee on Budgets Allocation) to #4 due to the need for one of the presenters (Nicholas Auyang, Co-Chair, Committee on Budgets) to leave the meeting early.

The following motion to amend the agenda was seconded by Beth Ali.

***THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED*** that the Board of Stewards approve the agenda as amended of the 1331<sup>st</sup> Meeting.

The motion was carried by voting members of the Board of Stewards.

**3. Approval of the Minutes of the 1330<sup>th</sup> Meeting** (Terry Gardiner, Chair)

The Chair asked if there were any amendments to be made to the Minutes from the March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023 meeting.

Robert Fisher (Steward, Community Members Committee) requested a correction to the Minutes as is presented:

First Amendment: Robert noted that his last name was spelled incorrectly in the minutes. The minutes were changed to properly capture Robert Fisher's last name.

Second Amendment: Robert noted that there were some concerns raised at the March 30<sup>th</sup> meeting that was not recorded in the Other Business section of that meeting's minutes. Robert would like the minutes of the 1330<sup>th</sup> meeting to include the Community Members Committee concern raised around the status of the Map in the Map room and the crucifix removed from the Chapel. The minutes of the 1330<sup>th</sup> meeting was amended to capture this concern.

The following motion to approve the Minutes as amended was made by Robert Fisher, seconded by Jaime Sit.

***THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED*** that the Board of Stewards approve the Minutes as amended of the 1330<sup>th</sup> Meeting.

The motion was carried by voting members of the Board of Stewards.

**4. Presentation on the 2023-2024 Committee on Budgets Allocation** (Jiaqi Sun and Nicholas Auyang, Co-Chairs, Committee on Budgets)

Nicholas Auyang introduced the Committee on Budgets (CoB) as a subcommittee of the Hart House Board of Stewards responsible for assisting the student committees with the annual budget allocation to ensure consistency with the strategic plan and programs.

Jiaqi Sun provided an overview of the Committee plan and budget process. On May 27<sup>th</sup>, the committee held a community planning and development day as an introductory meeting for all student committee Treasurers and Chairs. On July 11 and 13 the Committee Treasurers and Chairs presented their budgets to the CoB for review.

The total budget allotment for 2023-24 is \$130,000. The total requested budget from committees was \$122,297. The difference will be allocated as contingency.

**a. Motion to approve the 2023-24 Committee on Budgets Allocation** (Lucas Olmstead, Steward, Finance)

The following motion was made by Lucas Olmstead, seconded by Robert Fisher.

***THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED*** that the Board of Stewards approve the 2023-2024 Committee on Budgets allocation of Club and Committee budgets as presented.

The motion was carried by voting members of the Board of Stewards.

**5. Introduction to the 2023-2024 Agenda Committee** (Jenifer Newcombe, Director, Strategic Initiatives)

Jenifer Newcombe introduced the Agenda Committee as a standing committee of the Hart House Board of Stewards composed of the Warden, the Chair as ex-officio member, one senior member of the Board, and up to four student members of the Board. The responsibilities of the committee include reviewing materials, identifying errors and omissions, reviewing the minutes from the previous meeting, and deciding whether to cancel meetings. The committee conducts most of their business and communications over email.

**a. Motion to Create the 2023-2024 Agenda Committee** (David Kim, Warden)

The following motion was made by David Kim, seconded by Samara Tower

***THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED*** that the Board of Stewards create the 2023-2024 Agenda Committee.

The motion was carried by voting members of the Board of Stewards.

The Chair asked if there are any member of the Board interested in participating on the 2023-24 Agenda Committee. The following members of the Board volunteered to be on the 2023-24 Agenda Committee:

Nadia Rosemond – Presidential Appointee

Shanti Dhoré – APUS Representative

Jacky Yu – Steward, Literary & Library Committee

Riddhi Sahaye – Steward, Student Social Justice Committee

Aidan Thompson – UTSU Representative

Therefore, the 2023-24 Agenda committee shall be composed of the volunteers as well as the Warden and the Chair.

**6. Warden's Report** (David Kim, Warden and Jenifer Newcombe, Director, Strategic Initiatives)

David Kim started the report by reiterating the importance of the work being done at the Hart House and what the House represents within the broader community.

Jenifer Newcombe presented Hart House Policy Review project update. The Policy review project was launched last year as a part of the standard review process for the Standing Committee Terms of Reference. Through that process, we recognize the opportunity to expand beyond the Standing Committee Terms of Reference with a view to streamlining, simplifying, and addressing gaps in our processes. Six frameworks were identified, three have been completed and presented to the Board last year. This year we will be working on the Hart House Clubs, Hart House Membership, and Hart House Conduct frameworks. The updates will be presented to the Board of Stewards as they are ready.

David continued the Warden's report by providing some noteworthy updates and information. The Marketing and Communications team published a series of videos to promote the various aspects of the operations and programming of the Hart House. Dave shared the new Orientation video, and the Wellness video. Clubs day was a huge success with lots of traffic at our tables. As part of this year's orientation, Xplore Hart House is happening on September 21 with a wide variety of fun activities to engage student and introduce them to what Hart House has to offer. This year's activities also include tri-campus engagement efforts. We are providing shuttle buses from Mississauga and Scarborough campuses for those students to come to Hart House and engage in the activities. The Marketing and Communications team have initiated a strategic brand campaign in different locations across Toronto to advertise some of the unique opportunities that the Hart House present to students and community members alike. A few Hart House advertisements were placed at Queens Park & St. George subway stations.

David further highlighted some of the events that happened at Hart House over the summer; UofT Pride Pub, Chess Club Summer Junior Tournament, Classical Theatre Slam, Sports Day Donation Drive with the 519, Artists in the 6ix gala and more. Other noteworthy updates include the reopening of the Arbor room and Gallery Grill on August 28 and September 11 respectively. TBucks are now accepted at both locations and students now have mobile ordering option for the Arbor room. The Information Services has also introduced Hart House Guided Tours starting September to provide an opportunity for students and guests to have a captivating walk-through and a glimpse into the unique history of Hart House spaces and facilities. Hart House's bookable meeting and event spaces received sustainability certification through UofT's Sustainable Change Program. The following rooms are now platinum certified:

- Great Hall and The Quad
- Debates Room
- East Common Room
- Music Room
- Bickersteth Room
- Board Room
- Committees Room
- Meeting Room
- Donald Burwash Dining Room
- South Sitting Room

Beginning September 4th, Information Services is extending its support at the Fitness Centre's main desk and information desk. Visitors now have extended access to our fitness facilities until 9:30pm on weekdays and 6:30pm on weekends. A new rest space is now open on Fridays from 2-4pm. It is a space where students and guests can take time to rest.

The University of Toronto will commemorate the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation on Friday, September 29th with remarks from Alexandra Gillespie, Vice-President & Principal, University of Toronto Mississauga, and Rose Patten, Chancellor, University of Toronto, in the Great Hall at Hart House. Students can join the event in person at the Great Hall or live stream from anywhere. Wellness walks will be happening on September 15 and 29. Hip Hop's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary event series happening at Hart House include: Producers' Circle, Lyricists' Lounge, and "Know the Ledge" a hip hop education, pedagogy, and professional development event. Students are also encouraged to register for the upcoming Hart House Farm trip on September 24.

Michelle Brownrigg (Senior Director and Chief Program Officer) shared additional information regarding the Orange Shirt Day and National Day for Truth & Reconciliation event. The September 29 event features primarily a panel of non-Indigenous people who will be discussing the work they are doing to consider the impacts of Residential Schools and consideration of Indigenous histories. Additionally, on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, in support of the National September 30<sup>th</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Day, there will be an Indigenous focused gathering for Indigenous staff, student, faculty, and librarians at Hart House Farm, so that they can be in community together.

Aron Mohr (Director, Hospitality) shared that our 5-buck lunch is back. On September 26<sup>th</sup>, we are inviting students to come and enjoy nutritious lunch at the Hart House for \$5. There will be options to meet the various dietary requirements. Community members are also able to participate in this meal deal for \$9.

## 7. Other Business

Robert Fisher raised concerns that the Community Members Committee would like to see further discussion at the Board of Stewards regarding changes to the House, specifically focusing on contemplated changes to artifacts and furniture. Robert specifically referenced the removal of the map from the map room, and the removal of the Crucifix from the Chapel. Robert and some members of the Community Members Committee wanted to understand the process in reaching these decisions and urged that consensus by the Board be adopted in such decisions.

Tyrus Kalanyos highlighted the importance of transparency in processes while noting that not every decision needs to involve the Board, further stating that certain decisions, like the removal of specific artifacts such as the map and the crucifix, can be made without exhaustive consultation, with the aim of creating a more welcoming and open environment for diverse communities.

Samara Tower also added that it is important to recognize that there must have been an internal process that led to the outcome of the removal of the artifacts in question though the specifics of that process may not be known to the Board.

Nadia Rosemond highlighted the challenge that Hart House faces in balancing the needs of different groups, such as current students and those who have memories of the institution from the past, further acknowledging the clash between these groups and raising the question of who Hart House is primarily obligated to serve. She further stated that given the evolving needs of the current population, there is a strong case for prioritizing changes in the space to align with the expectations and requirements of the present day, which may differ significantly from the past.

David Kim highlighted how administrative actions and decision-making processes are guided by the institution's strategic plan and are generally part of day-to-day operations. He continued by further suggesting an alternative approach to education where instead of maintaining offensive artifacts, educational components like guided walks could be used to explain the history and changes within the space, aligning with the institution's values of equity, inclusivity, and diversity. Emphasizing that this is merely a suggestion for consideration, not a formal proposal, and highlights the principle of education as a key aspect of this approach.

Jenifer Newcombe provided additional context related to the importance of considering past processes and principles, such as the Anti-Black Racism Task Force and the University's report in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, which have involved various stakeholders in discussions about representation, space, and recommendations. It was further suggested that it might be beneficial for the Community Members Committee to refer to these institutional policy documents to get a better understanding of the strategic reasons for the decision to make the changes pertaining to artifacts and furniture.

Aidan Thompson emphasized the importance of giving students a voice and agency in decision-making processes, especially regarding spaces and objects, further noting that involving students in these decisions is critical to preventing similar situations in the future.

The Chair closed the discussion by emphasizing that the presence of the specific artifacts mentioned throughout this discussion may impact individuals in ways that do not align with our principles and institutional values. He continued by further urging for a focus on finding alternative ways to educate without causing harm to our

community members.

**8. Next Meeting**

The 1332<sup>nd</sup> Board of Stewards meeting will be held same time on October 12, 2023.

**9. Adjournment**

The following motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Robert Fisher seconded by Jaime Sit.