

NEWS

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Council Watch

JOSEPH FITZPATRICK
THE BRUNSWICKAN

The last Council meeting of the year was a two hour affair. Each of the Executive presented fairly lengthy year-end reports highlighting the events of the year.

Trish Davidson, Vice-President (Student Services) headlined the Health Plan. In her opinion, it's "as good as it will get for a while." She feels that once the Business Office switches from batch-processing to real-time updating, there will be a paperless opt-out procedure.

Davidson is pretty satisfied with the coverage of the Health Plan, and it's price. Compared to many campuses across Canada, she said, UNB's plan is very reasonable, but not too cheap. There has been some outcry about adding a dental plan, but Davidson does not feel that this is a viable alternative. Blue Cross has provided her with prices in the range of \$300-400, which Davidson would not be acceptable to students.

The Paper Trail was another area Davidson feels has changed significantly, for the better. "It's become more diverse," she said. With the exception of the Manager's salary, the operation breaks even, she claims.

As VP (Student Services) Davidson represents students on the UNB Senate Student Services Committee, but she is far from pleased at the performance of this committee.

"I won't go over the absolute junk that this committee does," she said. "It's very ineffective."

She added that she felt the members of the committee were not accountable to the students.

She lay some of the blame for the committee's lackluster performance to the chair, who, according to Davidson, did not call a meeting until January, and then, only on her insistence.

Davidson also criticized Dean of Student Services and Affairs Tom Austin for not being willing to stand up for students. "I bet he's got a sore ass from sitting on the fence."

She points to the parking issue as a prime example of the attitude the administration has toward student concerns.

"They think it's like a cold you get once a year," said Davidson.

"Let's give them the flu," suggested President-elect and Vice-President (External) Anthony Knight, dryly.

Davidson had a mixed opinion on the Student Resource Center and the Employment Opportunities Bureau. She felt the EOB had warranted a summer position last year, rather than the Resource Center. She described the SRC, under Eric Moores, as "run adequately" while she indicated that the EOB, under Rod Nadeau, "did a fairly good job."

"There were a few gripes," Davidson told Council regarding the placement of the Student phone directory on-line. But overall, she is sure that students will be better off in the long run, and "it will become more acceptable" in the coming years.

Davidson suggests that the next publications manager will have a tough act to follow, but the incumbent, Mark Morgan (a former Editor-in-chief of *The Brunswickan*), was left extensive resources for the next person.

Vice-President (External) Anthony Knight's year-end report was chronological.

"When I went to my first NBA meeting," he said candidly. "I was not even sure of what the acronym meant." He subsequently has become quite familiar with the New Brunswick Student Alliance and its President Shawn Rouse.

Knight outlined his experience with the Maritimes Provinces Higher Education Commission, first at a conference on performance indicators, and now as the student appointee on the MPHEC.

Knight cited the emergence of a regional student movement, dubbed Atlantic, which has grown from a conference early in the year at the University of Prince Edward Island to a full-fledged executive orientation conference, scheduled for May or June.

And then, there was "a cold morning in January" when Knight received the University's Task Force on Tuition Policy report. Knight recalled the efforts to express a student point of view, "I believe we were heard," he said.

Monique Scholten's office is a disaster area. By her own admission, there will have to be some serious cleaning up to do. She outlined the secret for her success "if you don't get it, you don't get it." She pointed to the fact that only \$9,900 of the SU's \$12,000 Grants fund has been expended, a situation which has not been the case for at least five years.

She recommended that future Vice-Presidents (Finance & Administration)

ensure that grant applicants and student clubs and societies are constantly reminded of financial policies of the SU. "I didn't realize that the turnover [of society executives] happens at different times for different societies."

She also recommended that when clubs violate policies or are warned, that there be a written record.

As for the Cellar, Scholten says that although this year was good, questions remain about the future of the bar.

"Overall, they had a very good year," she said. "Except for the summer."

"It is losing money," she noted. "And it has been losing money."

"There are two options," she argued. "Either incorporate a regular subsidy from the Union, or draw a line and don't keep handing over the money."

"They will need to be monitored closely," she said. "But a decision is going to have to be made some time in the future."

Scholten was quick to share the adulation for the Union's financial year. "I was really lucky to have such a good finance committee," she said. "Maybe the Union should be a bit more selective in the future, [to make sure] we get a good committee."

Anoushka Courage, winner of the James Downey Student Leadership Award, made a brief report to Council on her activities this year.

"I'm not going to talk about the CART [Canadian Academic Round Table] conferences," she said. "Because I've already made two detailed reports to Council."

Most of Courage's time has been spent serving on University committees, such as Student Standings and Promotions (which deals with academic appeals), Curriculum (which approves course descriptions and programs), Senate Nominating (which determines the composition of Senate committees).

"In contrast to Trish's experience," Courage said. "I found that most of the [faculty and administrators] on my committees were student oriented, and eager to help."

Courage told Council that the Student Disciplinary Committee will be making a report on the Student Disciplinary Code, apparently before she leaves office.

Courage pointed to the two areas in her portfolio: the Student Advocacy Center (Meredith McClelland, Director) and the Sexual Assault/Campus Safety (Julie Troost, Coordinator) both of which had good years.

"The SAC has done a great job," she said. "They have diversified their client base, and there is definitely increased awareness."

President Joie Hellmeister presented her final report with aplomb. "This year's Council was inquisitive and accountable," she said. "Though some decisions we made were not the popular ones."

Hellmeister pointed to her changing awareness of the complex relationship between the Administration and the Student Union.

"I had thought that we could just work together," she said. "One of the brightest spots of her year was the student rally at the Board of Governors meeting, in protest of proposed changes to tuition policy."

"For a moment, we seemed to have destroyed apathy," she claimed. She pointed to her efforts at promotion and enhancement of the Student Union.

"I used to call in marketing," she said. "But I got shit for that."

Hellmeister claims that the "myunion@unb.ca" e-mail account has received over 300 messages this year, and that she has responded to them mostly in 24 hours.

As for the football referendum, Hellmeister is happy with the results. "I'm really proud of this Council for sending the question to the students," she said.

Hellmeister next pointed to SU victories from the point of view of the SUB Advisory Board, on which she sits. The Board decided not to charge rent to the SRC, the Paper Trail, not evict *The Aquinian*, and recommend that the Social Club not be allowed to lease the ballroom, pay UNB \$30,000 and spend \$150,000 on renovations.

As far as SUB Expansion is concerned, Hellmeister feels that the project has progressed too rapidly. "I personally don't believe it's a good idea to build the building [at this time]," she said.

Hellmeister was disappointed with the money that UNB raised for SUB Expansion through the Venture Campaign, only \$250,000, and suggested that the SU seriously look at its own fund raising, and investigate the possibility of coordination with the Alumni Association and the Development Office.

GORDON LOANE
THE BRUNSWICKAN

UNB's Dean of Residence John Craighead plans to decide in the next week or so what action to take in light of a complaint about a potentially offensive e-mail distributed to the residents of Aitken House on March 21.

The e-mail includes a request for relationship advice and is considered by the complainant to be derogatory in describing homosexual sex between the author of the letter and the author's former roommate.

It concludes by asking that the recipient respond with an advice.

According to the header information on the e-mail in question, the original message from another Aitken House resident was allegedly sent to Derrick Lord, an Academic Resource Person (ARP) in the House.

The same header further suggests that it was Lord who allegedly forwarded the message to his housemates.

In investigating the complaint, the Dean of Residence is now of the opinion that both the original sender of the message and the ARP made a mutual decision to forward it to House residents.

"After speaking to both individuals involved we have now ascertained that the original message was a prank from the original sender to the ARP and that after it was sent, the two of them discussed the message and decided, seemingly mutually, that it would be humorous to broadcast it to the House," the Dean told *The Brunswickan* this week.

"We are reassured that the message was not a genuine cry for help from someone that the ARP indiscriminately broadcast."

Clearly, the Dean of Residence is not amused by this incident.

"We think the letter shows unfortunate stereotypical attitudes and the fact that it was broadcast by the ARP shows extremely poor judgment on the part of the ARP and perhaps a lack of sensitivity on the part of the ARP to these same issues," Craighead said.

"ARPs have a responsibility to promote positive attitudes in the House, not to encourage negatives ones, so I think in the case of the ARP there will be some action in the near future."

Since ARPs are employed by the University, Craighead said that the matter will be dealt with in the employment context.

He declined to say what will be decided but among the options include some sort of probationary period to non-renewal of the ARPs contract at the end of the academic year.

The Dean noted that the ARP in

number of concerns, according to residents of McGee House, the 102 unit apartment complex owned by the University on Montgomery Street.

While monthly rental rates are reduced by between \$110 and \$130 in the summer, residents want to know what additional services the university provides in winter to justify the extra monthly rental rates. McGee students also wonder why they are forced to pay the \$55 yearly parking fee.

Other issues that surfaced for McGee residents were lack of heat control in each apartment, sometimes poor ventilation and why humidifiers were removed from apartments recently without seemingly any explanation from university officials.

McGee residents also want to establish a clear line of communication about their concerns with university officials.

As far as food service is concerned, some students at the meeting complained of poor service, rude service and a lack of flexibility on the part of the food service provider in changing menus.

Food representatives meet about every two months and are being told because of the contract with Beaver Foods, menus cannot be changed during a school term. Students want this looked into.

Students also voiced concerns about too much fatty food on the menu and not enough healthy foods. Others thought a small meal plan should be investigated.

Other students were left to discover that dropping from a 19 meal plan to a 14 meal plan was not possible, yet going from 14 to 19 meals was no problem at all.

For Dean of Residence John Craighead some students feel their concerns are not being dealt with quickly enough.

Some felt there is a communication problem with the Dean's office in that

automatic doors on the entry to the Integrated University Complex which faces the Forestry building.

"There's already a ramp there," said Clark. "We plan to add the doors, and maybe widen the ramp."

According to Clark, UNB Physical Plant will also be installing a set of exterior lights.

Given the number of student pledges and the time remaining, Clark feels this year's goal of \$10,000 is well within sight.

"The letters to parents have just gone out," Clark said. "Usually, parents donate more."

Clark added that though it fluctuates from year to year, parents contributed roughly 60% of last year's project.

If the goal is exceeded, Clark indicated that there is an opportunity

Grad Class: \$7,000 pledged

Joseph FitzPatrick
The Brunswickan

With just under three weeks to go, students have pledged \$7,000 towards the Grad Class project for 1997.

Grad Class President Jeff Clark expects that about 80% of those pledges will become donations. That figure means that just over 30% of students graduating in May will have contributed to the project.

Each year, the graduating class decides on a project in order to leave their mark on the UNB campus, which has undoubtedly left an impression on them.

This year's project, entitled "Doors of Opportunity - Providing Access to Knowledge" consists of a set of



Our photo editor has done it again. Unfortunately, I was not very specific in my request for a photo, and, as such, got lots of stories, but few photos. Thanks for everything, Jud.

JUDSON DELONG PHOTO

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concerns raised never seem to result in feedback.

Some decisions are never directly conveyed to those who ask questions or raise concerns.

One student said flat out that concerns don't seem to be respected or listened to at the Dean's office.

Another suggested the problem in the Dean's office may be overwork. He told the external reviewers the office is understaffed and needs a full-time Dean, an Assistant Dean, and a Residence Life Manager.

There was also the suggestion that the lack of permanent appointments in the Dean's office is hampering long-term planning and effective administration.

Residents also feel it is high time that a residence handbook listing all rules, regulations and procedures be produced and distributed.

Several students had praise for the Academic Resource Person (ARP's) and the adoption of that concept in the residence system.

But one resident of Neill House wondered why two ARP's in the House are Arts students while ninety per cent of house residents attend classes in Science and Engineering.

A better system of referrals between ARP's is also needed, one student told the review team.

One student said UNB needs to improve its description of residence accommodation in conjunction with its application for admission to UNB.

A bit of background information on each house would be helpful in deciding which House to apply to live in, the student said.

Another student wanted to live on campus and had no idea Maggie Jean Chestnut was located in downtown Fredericton off the main campus.

"Maggie Jean is not listed as being off-campus when you apply for residence," the student commented.

to increase the accessibility of the outside door to the IUC which leads to the Business Office.

The accessibility project is scheduled to be completed by mid-May, in time for Graduation Week. The unveiling will take place on May 21 at 4pm, following the first graduation ceremony.

During the week, there will also be a formal on the evening of May 21, and the traditional tree planting will take place earlier that afternoon.

Clark added that sweat shirts are still available, and that donations for the Grad Class Project will be accepted until May 1. More information can be obtained at the Grad Class Office, located in Room 117 of the SUB (next to the jewelry store).

question has already apologized to Aitken House residents and he describes that as a "very positive step."

"But at the same time, I am concerned about the judgment the ARP exercised," Craighead said.

The Dean is not ruling out disciplinary action against the original sender of the e-mail message as well.

"At this point, it would be pre-mature for me to say whether or not disciplinary action will be taken," he said.

With respect to how the residence system and, indeed, University officials plan to deal with any possible future complaints involving e-mail messages, Craighead is promising to clarify the confusion soon.

He told *The Brunswickan* this week that because of the External Review of the Residence System and the presence of the external review team on campus last week, he has still not spoken to Computing Services Director David MacNeil and others.

But depending upon circumstances further abuse of e-mail in residences may result in sanctions by Computing Services, the Residence System, or both.

"In the case of e-mail abuse the University usually reacts by inactivating the e-mail account of the perpetrators," Craighead said.

"On the other hand, there may indeed be circumstances in which sanctions might be applied by both the Computing Services Department and the Dean of Residence," Craighead concluded.

The lack of a seniors wing or a 23 hour quiet hall irked at least one student who attended the public meeting.

"I can get no answers as to why this cannot be the case," the student said.

Other students were more than concerned about the complaints procedure in the residence system.

Many feel the university reaches decisions about residences in the summer months, leaving students out in the cold as far as consultation is concerned.

One student gave as an example the mid-summer decision to change Neill House from an all-male residence to Co-ed.

Students need to know well in advance what is going on so they can decide where they wish to live in the future, one student explained.

Others suggested that decisions on residence fees for the following year are always decided in the middle of April exams.

"Why can't the university decide the issue in March or even earlier to allow us to make decisions about our living accommodations for next year?" one student questioned.

One student wondered about the effectiveness of the Student Health Centre. "I don't find them very useful."

"They seem to be just there to write notes for you for your professors when you are sick."

Often, the student said, the Health Centre will refer you to the Chalmers Hospital where in the emergency room you might sit for hours on end.

One resident of Aitken House took the university to task for charging \$200 for the ResNet System even if a student does not have a computer to use it.

Logging on to the computer system was sited as slow at certain hours as well.

The external review team faced questions about the review process, when it would be completed and where it would lead.

Brian Johnston, a member of the review team, indicated that a report for UNB's Vice-President Academic Louis Visentin should be completed in two months.

"Hopefully, the report will be used as a planning document for the future of the residence system," Johnston told the students at the meeting.

Heather Sutherland, Chair of the review team, pointed out that written submissions from residence students can still be accepted. "A direct address for each of us will be left with the Dean of Students Affairs and Services Office," she emphasized.

Approximately thirty written submissions have already been received. Sutherland asked the students at the meeting to pass the word along to fellow residents as well.

"All submissions sent will be treated as confidential," she said.