

MUGWUMP

by Allan Carter

The other evening I had the opportunity to attend a CHSR general membership meeting. CHSR struck a committee a few months back to create a new constitution for the station. That new constitution was debated for over an hour at the meeting. And a strange debate it was. It appears that a small group of members of the station decided to draft their own constitution which they felt was better than the one that the committee created. However, instead of going to the committee while it was drafting a new constitution, this small group took it upon themselves to present their constitution proposal at the meeting the other evening. Unfortunately, the chair decided to recognize this second constitution at the same time that the committee was presenting their proposed constitution. Of course, all this resulted in total chaos. The chair made a big boo boo and it was not the only boo boo he had made that evening. If the small group of members had suggestions for the constitution they should have approached members of the committee when the committee was creating a new constitution. The small group's constitution was not on the agenda for the meeting and it should have come under "other business". One lame argument was that hardly anybody knew that a committee had been struck to create a new constitution. That would seem unlikely given that this small group decided to present their constitution on the same night as the committee did. Coincidental? I doubt it.

But at the same time, I believe that this small group was trying to make a point. The proposed constitution from the committee is far from finished and more review needs to be done before it can go into effect. The committee's intent the other evening was to have the proposed constitution approved by the membership and if other changes needed to be made they would do so. Such a process is tricky because there is no guarantee that anybody is going to make changes to the constitution once it is approved. For the station's safety, the proposed constitution must first be reviewed at great length, no matter how boring such a process may be, before final approval. Greg Lutes, president of the Student Union, was given special permission from the chair to speak since he is not a station member. Lutes pointed out that when the Student Union is reviewing constitutional proposals they usually go through three meetings before approval. I think that point hit home the other evening for many station members. The committee's proposed constitution had only gone through one review at a meeting that hardly held quorum.

I feel sorry for the members of the committee because the whole process the other evening was an insult to their hard work. It was obvious that the proposed constitution was not ready and that a few more meetings would have to be held before final approval. However, the chair's decision to recognize the other constitution during the debate on the committee's constitution was completely out of order and converted the whole process of discussion and feedback into a circus. It is obvious that this committee has been trying to get feedback on the proposed constitution for a few months. But as Bill Paizley pointed out during the meeting, that interest in the constitution has now just arisen and it is up to the committee and the station to deal with it. The committee was hoping to get the constitution passed the other evening, yet it was apparent to many at the meeting that this constitution was not ready. Now that more members of the station are interested in the proceedings, perhaps a more effective process will evolve where the general membership will have a chance to review the constitution at their meetings before final approval. Of course, the committee's biggest worry is whether or not members will still be interested in the constitutional proceedings after the summer break. Needless to say, with only a general meeting every month during the academic term, the review of the constitution will have to be done during meetings next term. Let's hope the level of interest from the general membership does not disappear over the summer or the enactment of a new constitution at CHSR may take longer than anyone ever expected. Heck, who knows, maybe a department at CHSR may decide that they want to separate, wouldn't that screw up the proceedings?

Jane Buckley, whose position was terminated at the STU Student Union last year, was rewarded \$19,708.87 plus legal costs (see page one). Judge H.H. McLellan's decision has caused quite a stir at the Union. Judge McLellan had a few harsh words for Kelly Lamrock, who was president of the Union at the time of Buckley's removal. I'm not exactly sure what the total costs will be for the Union. However, if they decide not to appeal, the money will have to be found somewhere. Perhaps Jeff London, the outgoing Union president or Pat McDermott, the new president, may want to phone up Lamrock who is now chair of The Canadian Federation for Students - National, and see if he wishes to contribute to the costs. I hear the salary for chair of CFS is pretty good these days.

On another note about STU, rumor has it that their ombudsperson has decided that a re-election should be held. Apparently, there were quite a few voting irregularities during the election. However, while the executive is aware of the ombudsperson's report, it has not been presented to council and the executive is holding a meeting this Saturday to discuss the report. Suffice to say, most of the outgoing executive and the incoming executive have vested interests in whether or not a new election will be held. Let's hope that the ombudsperson's report will have some impact on this matter.

OPINION

The opinions found in Opinion are not necessarily the views of The Brunswickan

Lets talk about CHSR-FM

by George Ato Eguakun

CHSR-Fm has been in the news of late. The apparent issue at stake is that students want more say in the affairs of the radio station because they pay 75% of the operating budget of the radio station.

Funding cuts to the radio station have become a phenomenal tool in an attempt to see revolutionary changes in the Board of Directors. First, it was GSA, the STU and now the UNB SU.

The Board consists of eleven members; two each from the UNB SU and CHSR, one each from STU SU, the GSA, the City Council, the Senate, the Board of Governors, the Alumni and the STU Administration. Out of the eleven members, students have four representations which equals the strength of the two Administration put together. Looking at the composition of the Board, I find it difficult to accept the concept that students don't have true representation.

Some even argue that Administration is over represented. Out of the 30,078 sq. ft. of space in the Student Union Building, CHSR occupies 2006 sq. ft. free of charge. In addition, CHSR enjoys free heating facilities, power, janitorial services and maintenance of equipment. If these facilities were computed in monetary terms, we shall no longer hold that view that students contribute 75% of the total operating cost. Thus we cannot either consciously or unconsciously overlook administration's contribution, without which the radio station cannot function, student funding notwithstanding.

Yet others believe that students must not pay two full-time non-student personnel to run the station. Jeff London emphasized this by reiterating that "the Aquinian is funded by the Students because the Editor is elected directly by the students and is therefore subject to their approval". Going by this reasoning, I would venture to advocate for the immediate termination of the paid secretaries working for the Student Union, because they were not elected by the students. The most plausible motive for keeping the secretaries however is that, the nature of the job is such that students cannot perform creditably in addition to their academic work if given the chance to do it.

As in the case of the secretaries, it will be wishful thinking to conceive the notion that the two management positions at CHSR can easily be handled by student volunteers. We should not lose sight of the fact that CHSR's operations are unique in comparison to other student funded institutions. It operates almost twenty-four hours a day for three hundred and sixty five (or 366?) days. The student managers must be prepared to forgo their summer employments and/or vacations to stay at the radio station during the summer holidays. Big Brother Van even suggested that the positions could be turned into summer employments in the summer. I am not too sure where the money will come from to pay for the summer employment though.

In my opinion the issue at stake is not that of money. A personnel review carried out last September recommended that the Station Manager's contract be not renewed for another term. Part of the problem is why he is still at the post in spite of the recommendation. A school of thought has it that if students had more say in the affairs of CHSR, the Station Manager would have been booted out of office a long time ago. On the other hand no one is insisting on the implementation of a recommendation by the same committee that the Program Coordinator be given a raise. Rather the proposed \$27,000 cut means the Program Coordinator has lost his job instead. How fair this game is, I don't really know.

We don't need a majority representation on the Board before pressing for the removal of any member of CHSR's management found to be incompetent. What is required are dynamic student representatives to the Board. The onus lies on them to be convincing enough to win as many members to their side as possible on any issue. If the four of them cannot pull ideas and present strongly refined arguments to drive home students' point, then I wonder why they are elected as representatives at all. Their job as student representatives to the Board will not be challenging at all if students had majority representation.

Looking at the composition of the CHSR Board, which has been in place since 1981, it looks as if it was not set up to reflect economic power. Membership has been designed to bring together a variety of perspectives for the good of the station. It is however sad that we as students see the Board or want to see it as a sort of an economic control mechanism.

No one is saying there are no problems at CHSR, but whatever problems there are should not be solved by cutting vital funding to the station. Cutting the funds will only worsen the situation, and in the long run result in an irreparable damage. Instead of Board members resigning, they could advocate for the setting up of an ad-hoc committee, to see how best the radio station could be operated at the minimum cost to the student.

CHSR is held in high esteem in the Maritimes. We must be proud that other Maritime Radio Station leaders visit our radio station to learn about our programming methods. By offering exchange programmes with other Campus Radio stations across Canada, the management have carved a good reputation for UNB and the Fredericton community at large. We should not take any decisions that will undermine this enviable achievement. Let us release the funds to the station while we put our heads together to find the most feasible way of solving the problems that abound. In the same way that we are called upon to support our local artists, I will say support your local radio station. Are there any voices that care? If you are happy and you know, give your support to CHSR-FM.