

**PDFA Executive Council Meeting
October 19th, 2023
Teleconference Meeting**

Present: AKM Shahid Ullah, President
Sherif Ahmed, VP Communications
MD Shaheen, VP Internal
Alsayed Mostafa, Member-at-Large
Alivia Mukherjee, Member-at-Large
Henry Prown, Member-at-Large

Guest(s): Razieh FirouziHaji, Member
Ahmed Badr, Member

Staff: Samantha Spurrier, Executive Assistant
Joy Correia, Director of Operations
Terry Sway, Labour Relations Officer
Scott Harris, Communications

Regrets: Kayanna Reff, Office Assistant
Christianne Nylund, Labour Relations Officer

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:07 AM.

2. Land Acknowledgment

The President acknowledged that the PDFA is located on territory now known as Treaty 6.

3. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: To approve the agenda for October 19, 2023 Shahid/Shahen	CARRIED
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4. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: To approve the minutes for September 14 th , 2023 Shaheen/Sherif	CARRIED
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5. President's Report (AKM Shahid Ullah)

5.1. The President welcomed the new Executive Board.

5.2. The President introduced Ahmed Badr, who has expressed interest in the position of VP Finance.

MOTION: To appoint Ahmed Badr as the VP Finance on the PDFA Executive. Sherif/Shahen	CARRIED
MOTION: To remove MD Monirujjaman and appoint Ahmed Badr as the signing authority. Shaheen/Henry	CARRIED

5.3. The President provided an overview of the PDFA Appreciation Week. He noted that the presentations, Research Day, and onboarding events at GSR went well. The ECHA was poorly attended with only 5 attendees, and there were 98 guests at the dinner. It was suggested that photography and communications be improved, to improve attendance.

5.4. The President was unable to attend the General Faculties Council (GFC) meeting on October 16. The GFC makes important decisions around academia. This is an opportunity to demonstrate how Post Doctoral Fellows contribute to the academic decisions and provide voice and representation.

MOTION: To appoint Alsayed Mostafa to the GFC.
Ahmed/Henry

CARRIED

- 5.5. The President reported that the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) has changed its name to FGPS and will be supporting the post-doctoral fellows going forwards.
- 5.6. The President shared that the PDFA needs to select a representative to the Canadian Association of Postdoctoral Scholas (CAPS). Many post-doctoral fellow associations have representation on this group, which meets for one to two hours every three to four months. Member-at-Large Alivia expressed interest.

MOTION: To appoint Alivia Mukherjee as the CAPS representative.
Sherif/Henry

CARRIED

It was suggested that these positions could be included in the Executive positions.

- 5.7. Discussion of the Travel Award Committee was postponed to the next meeting.
- 5.8. The President introduced Razieh Firouzi-haji, who has expressed interest in the vacant position of VP Operations.

MOTION: To appoint Razieh Firouzi-haji as the VP Operations.
Sherif/Ahmed

CARRIED

- 5.9. Member-at-Large Alsayed Mostafa expressed interest in the vacant position of VP External.

MOTION: To appoint Alsayed Mostafa as the VP External.
Ahmed/Razieh

CARRIED

New board members were asked to share their contact information, including their work building.

6. **VP Finance Report** (AKM Shahid Ullah and Ahmed Badr)

The President reported that the PDFA spent \$10,000 on the Appreciation Week. This included \$2000 from FGSR. The PDFA currently has approximately \$95,000 in the bank account. The budget was presented at the Annual General Meeting. The new VP Finance requested access to the financial information from previous year; this will be shared with all new board members when they are given access to the PDFA google drive.

7. **Communications Strategist Report** (Scott Harris)

The Communications Strategist met with the Sherif to review communications processes and added him to social media accounts. He requested that all board members share a photo and bio for the website.

8. **Director of Operations Report** (Joy Correia)

The Director of Operations requested a recommendation from the board about whether to pursue trainees' and guests' status. The University refuses to cover these individuals under the Collective Agreement, but it is clear to the PDFA that all post-doctoral fellows are members of the PDFA and should receive coverage from the agreement. A complaint was filed with the ALRB a year ago but set aside for discussion with the university. No resolution has been reached and the ALRB would like to know whether the PDFA wishes to proceed or abandon the complaint. This has been discussed with legal counsel, and it is likely that even if the ALRB supports the PDFA, the university still may not cover these members.

This will be raised in the next round of bargaining (2025). It was suggested that these individuals be contacted for their input.

9. Labour Relations Officer Report (Terry Sway)

The Labour Relations Officer shared some issues that members have been having with Sunlife. This included issues with the ID code, which may require a 0 in front; this information has since been added to the website. It was suggested that a flowchart be created, or a presentation with Sunlife be organized.

The Labour Relations Officer shared two issues that will be priorities at bargaining. The first is vision care coverage; the LRO will investigate this cost. The second is regarding concerns of frequent abuse of Article 904, Termination Without Cause. Usage of this clause impacts the payout (subject to the length of service).

The Labour Relations Officer shared that he is advising the Post Doctoral Association of the University of Calgary. Their team has been constituted but they have not yet exchanged proposals. The LRO will provide general updates as appropriate.

10. Member-at-Large Report (Alsayed Mostafa)

Member-at-Large Alsayad requested more information regarding benefits coverage and suggested that coverage that extends past employment would be advantageous.

11. Member-at-Large (Alivia Mukherjee)

The President will send Member-at-Large Alivia information about the CAPS meetings.

12. VP Internal Report (MD Shaheen)

The VP Internal requested that the drive folders be streamlined for ease of access.

13. VP Communications Report (Sherif Ahmed)

The VP Communications met with the Communications Strategist. The Communications Strategist will continue to post on social media platforms and preparing the newsletter. The VP Communications will be responsible for social media posts. The newsletter will continue to be distributed once per month. It was noted that the university shares member information every two weeks.

14. Other Business

There was no other business.

15. In Camera

There was an in-camera session.

16. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:47 pm.

AKM Shahid Ullah, Interim-President & Chair

Kayanna Reff, Administrative Assistant