

Extraordinary TGSA Board Meeting

Monday, April 4, 2022 @ 10:30 am

Via Zoom

In Attendance: Morgan Bell, Patrick Nolin, Nathan Williams, Maureen Ononiwu, Hannah Ferguson, Gustave Ineza, David Kennedy, Vincent Yi, Mia Theocharis

Absent: Hannah Scanlon, Deborah Ko

1. Prayer/Territorial Acknowledgment

- Morgan B. offered prayer; Mia T. territorial acknowledgment.

2. Referendum; Spoiled Ballots

- Morgan Bell, CRO will discuss our concerns with the spoiled ballots.
 - Spoiled votes are considered non-votes. But they have the potential to support either the yes or no side inadvertently.
 - TGSA Policies and Procedures states: “To pass a referendum question requires both question and the support of a two-thirds majority of those voting.” Nothing is said about whether to count the spoiled votes.
 - Question #1 passes with or without counting the spoiled votes but the second one passes only if we do not count the spoiled vote, it does not pass if we include the spoiled vote. In this situation the spoiled votes unintentionally act as a “no.”
- Response received from U of T when we asked whether spoiled ballots should be counted: “This should be resolved through the processes outlined by the TGSA’s governing documents or, should no resolution be found there, by the organization’s elected Board of Representatives. That said, if the TGSA’s governing documents are silent on this issue, this would be a great opportunity for the Board to codify whatever is decided by way of some helpful amendments for future years.”
- Diane Henson, TST registrar, gave the same advice. She said we should meet and vote on whether to count the spoiled ballots/have this reflected in our Policies and Procedures.
- ***What does everyone think? Should the spoiled ballots be counted towards the 2/3 majority? Discuss.***
 - David K.: If there is not anything explicit in our constitution than they shouldn’t be counted, intentionally or unintentionally. In general type elections they would not be considered because they didn’t exist. First-past-the-post voting, you had to have a certain percentage in order to carry the vote one way or the other. The number of spoiled ballot for our referendum is hardly significant.
 - Morgan B.: Are these actually votes? Based on our wording in the policies and procedures.
 - Mia T.: Spoiled ballots are non-votes, they shouldn’t be counted amongst the “yes” or “no” votes — in this particular situation the spoiled ballots for question #2 are acting like “no” votes when they are either a “no” or “yes”

vote. Therefore, they shouldn't be counted as such. TGSA referendums before us do not consider spoiled ballots. That doesn't mean they haven't, but it isn't present in their referendum results.

- Gustave I.: I would also say that it depends on the nature of the spoiled ballot. If it is intentional, it would count (as a "no" vote). If it is by mistake, we could withdraw them and consider the rest. Also, we could have this discussion in town hall format as well to hear from students?
- Mia T.: The board has full discretion to resolve the issue on our own by voting. No need for a town hall.
- Nathan W.: There are four categories when voting: 1) yes, 2) no, 3) spoiled and 4) abstaining.
- Patrick N.: Since we are considering all those who voted, and technically people who spoiled their ballot voted, they should be considered in the 2/3 majority.
- David K.: In the future don't offer spoiled ballots as an option.
- Maureen O.: Not sure why it should count when the vote is neither a "yes" or "no." Even if they did participate in voting, their votes are technically a "zero."
- Nathan W.: Spoiled ballots are to let people know you did not like the choices that were offered. This is also different than an election of candidates as a referendum is simply a 'yes' or 'no.'
- David K.: Spoiled ballots have no validity to them. Like Maureen said, they have zero value — we shouldn't be taking them out of their context.
- Patrick N.: I agree with what is being said about the value of the ballot but they are still taking part in the process of "voting."
- Mia T.: If no one has any other comments I will put this to a vote. ***Should the spoiled ballots be counted among the yes or no votes?*** Morgan B. abstains from voting as CRO.
 - **Yes — 1**
 - **No — 6**
- **Motion:** To not include the spoiled ballots in the 2/3 majority we seek for a referendum question to pass, only the "yes" and "no" votes will be considered. And to have this reflected in TGSA's Policies and Procedures for future referendums.
 - Hannah F. motions to not include the spoiled ballots in the 2/3 majority we seek for a referendum question to pass, only the "yes" and "no" votes will be considered. And to have this reflected in TGSA's Policies and Procedures for future referendums. David K. seconds.
 - Morgan B. and Patrick N. abstain.
 - **All approve. Motion carries.**

Motion to Adjourn at 11:00 am

Respectfully submitted by Mia Theocharis, President
April 4, 2022