



# REPORT

*From the office of the...*

## Elections Department

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TO: Members of the Executive Board  
FROM: Helen Zeng (CRO), and Kritika Seth (DRO)  
SUBJECT: MSU Elections Department Report 6  
DATE: March 28, 2017

### UPDATE

Since our last report, we have mainly dealt with the Special March Referendum. The Referendum for Athletics & Recreation expansion and Student Activity Building failed in January but was brought back via the SRA as the University decided to give another \$10 million to the project. According to the rules, drafted an election schedule and question and passed it by the Elections Committee. This has been a unique experience, as a special referendum has not been called in a long time. The fines meeting went until around 9:30pm and the referendum passed! This was with a surprising voter turnout of 30.1% in two days which is a decent number given the busy time of the year and unusual timing of this referendum. 3854 (59.2%) voted in favour, 2660 (40.8%) voted against, and 245 (3.6%) abstained.

### Turnout Report

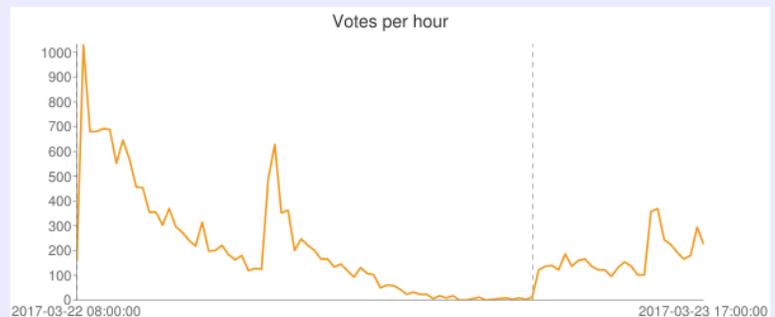
Cumulative Turnout: **6759 (30.1%)** of **22434** electors voted in this election.  
Average Turnout: **4,915.6** electors voted per day.

#### Turnout Chart

Date Range

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#### Turnout Chart (6759 electors voted)



## SERVICE USAGE

In this time, we have run external elections for McMaster Engineering Society, McMaster Social Sciences Society, McMaster University Nursing Students Society, and the McMaster Humanities Society. As well, we have had people requesting for meetings and a great amount of e-mail traffic in the past few weeks.

We are currently also helping to promote the Vice President Elections this weekend in collaboration with the Speaker and the Vice President Administration.

## PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

We have not held any large events for the March Referendum, however we are helping to run and promote the Vice President Meet and Greet happening March 27, 2017. This will be a chance for Vice President candidates to come and mingle with MSU members and communicate their preferences to SRA members. This was done in collaboration with the Speaker and the Vice President Administration.

## UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

With the VP Elections quickly approaching next weekend, the Elections Department is doing all it can to help out. We have created a Facebook event for the VP Meet and Greet, taking place on March 27<sup>th</sup> in 1280. We are also promoting this election through out FB page, twitter page and the MSU website. We are also planning a feedback session for EC, an informal meeting where we thank them for all of their hard work over the course of the year and conclude the year by discussing constructive feedback for the Department.

## BUDGET

<i>McMaster Student's Union</i>							
<i>Dept. 0303 - Elections Committee</i>							
<i>For the Ten Months Ending February 28, 2017</i>							
	Current	Prior Yr.	Current	Prior Yr.	Prior Yr.	Approved	% Budget
	Month	Month	YTD	YTD	YE	Budget	Used
	February	February	2016-17	2015-16	2015-16	2017	To Date
All:							
3801-0303 ELEC - OTHER REVENUE	(\$610.00)	(\$1,610.00)	(\$3,044.00)	(\$2,930.00)	(\$3,030.00)	(\$1,400.00)	217.43%
5003-0303 ELEC - OFFICE SUPPLIES			\$46.79			\$180.00	25.99%
5101-0303 ELEC - TELEPHONE			\$70.75	\$84.90	\$141.50	\$24.00	294.79%
5201-0303 ELEC - PHOTOCOPYING					\$0.56		0.00%
6102-0303 ELEC - PRESIDENTIAL REIMBURSEMENT	\$1,259.32	\$2,148.38	\$1,049.55	\$2,148.38	\$2,148.38	\$2,500.00	41.98%
6151-0303 ELEC - POLL BOOTH SET-UP		\$5,277.28	\$5,277.27	\$5,277.28	\$5,277.28	\$5,500.00	95.95%
6201-0303 ELEC - ELECTION REFUNDS			\$2,112.07	\$726.70	\$3,350.67	\$2,500.00	84.48%
6402-0303 ELEC - AWARDS & MEETINGS			\$205.59	\$406.53	\$503.30	\$300.00	68.53%
6501-0303 ELEC - ADV. & PROMO.	\$4,452.14	\$562.48	\$7,504.74	\$2,003.05	\$2,003.05	\$1,500.00	500.32%
6512-0303 ELEC - ADVERTISING - PRESIDENTIALS		\$193.68	\$970.36	\$3,440.31	\$4,799.31	\$3,000.00	32.35%
6513-0303 ELEC - PROMOTIONS - SRA MARCH						\$200.00	0.00%
6514-0303 ELEC - ONLINE ELECTION EXP.		\$124.84		\$124.84	\$124.84		0.00%
6901-0303 ELEC - TRAVEL & CONFERENCE	\$27.23		\$27.23		\$9.10		0.00%
7001-0303 ELEC - WAGES	\$1,440.46	\$1,423.83	\$9,466.46	\$9,202.44	\$12,388.60	\$12,000.00	78.89%
7101-0303 ELEC - BENEFITS	\$82.49	\$99.96	\$685.03	\$665.92	\$912.40	\$1,200.00	57.09%
8001-0303 ELEC - DEPRECIATION EXPENSE			\$181.24	\$169.90	\$271.85	\$300.00	60.41%
Total All	\$6,651.64	\$8,220.45	\$24,553.08	\$21,320.25	\$28,900.84	\$27,804.00	88.31%

## **VOLUNTEERS**

The Elections Committee has had two new members join us recently, Meg Hsu and Ellen Veinot. They have been adjusting to the Elections Committee wonderfully and are both amazing additions that have brought a lot of great perspectives and critical thought to our meetings. The committee as a whole has also been pulling through very well considering the busy time of year and the sheer amount of meeting we've had. Normally we have a meeting every two weeks or so, however we have had a meeting nearly every single week. We hope to hold a last feedback meeting and a volunteer social before their term ends.

## **CURRENT CHALLENGES**

The entire special referendum has been a struggle for the Elections Department as a whole. Normally, we are not working as many hours at this time of the year, which allows us to help out with other aspects of our job such as helping out with the General Assembly and promoting the Vice President elections. We still did our best in order to make these things happen, but by sheer lack of time and human resources we were limited in this year's approach.

One aspect of this process that was unclear to us is the interpretation of "setting the schedule". At first, we thought it meant that the Elections Committee could decide how long each period (nominations, campaigning, voting etc.) was. However, after scrutinizing the by-laws further we realized that this referendum might still be bound by the election date minimums (for a non by-elections 10 school days nomination, 6 school days campaigning). A clarification on the by-law might be useful as to what the by-law actually means. We worked very hard to hit the minimum number of dates given the Elections Committees impending disbanding (on March 31<sup>st</sup>) which was another stressor. However, if we still have to hit the minimum number of dates, there is no real reason the Elections Committee has to set the dates. Normally for every other election, the CRO and DRO will set the schedule and pass it by the SRA. This clarification would help a lot, as it decreases the number of steps that the Elections Department has to go through in order to hold the Referendum. Of course, having the Elections Committee pass the referendum question is still advised.

A phenomenon I have seen even from last year is the organization of Vice President Elections. The by-laws are vague regarding who is responsible for the brunt of organization and promotion of this election. As it is internal, the Elections Department has no say in how it is run; however we do play a role in promoting it. Even last year, communication between the Speaker, Vice President Administration, and Elections Department has been messy since no one really knows who takes a lead on this project. Elections is happy to help out in any way we can, but just needs more foresight and guidance on this. Perhaps amending the by-laws in order to be clearer would be helpful in the future.

## **SUCSESSES**

A major success is the high voter turnout of 30.1% for the special election. While we reasonably expected voter fatigue following the SRA Election (which ran simultaneously

with the Board of Governors Election of the University) students really stepped up to the task and surprised us with these numbers. We were extremely happy to see the high voter turnout. Furthermore, another success is that the CRO and DRO have been hired for the upcoming year, and we are slowly beginning the process of transitioning them into their new roles.