



# REPORT

*From the office of the...*

## AVP Municipal Affairs

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TO: Members of the Student Representative Assembly  
FROM: Stephanie Bertolo, Associate Vice President of Municipal Affairs  
SUBJECT: SRA 17H Report  
DATE: Tuesday, October 10, 2017

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### **PROGRESS ON YEAR PLAN**

My year plan is being presented at this meeting. However, I have made progress on some of my objectives thus far.

We continue to increase our presence and advocacy efforts in the community by consistently attending AWWCA and AWCA meetings and relevant city council meetings. Ryan Deshpande and I recently delegated at a Planning Committee Meeting against the increase of by-law enforcement in McMaster communities, which I will further discuss in Past Activities.

During the summer, I met with John Ariyo, the Manager of Community Initiatives for the City of Hamilton, to discuss and to provide input on the Youth Engagement Strategy that is set to be released on October 19<sup>th</sup>. I am also planning other meetings with stakeholders for the near future, achieving my objective to continuously meet with stakeholders throughout the year.

Planning Change Camp took up the majority of my time in the summer and September. The event, which happened on September 25<sup>th</sup>, was extremely successful. We received great feedback and are looking forward to seeing what projects emerge.

The Landlord Wiki is well on its way to being developed for second term. The Municipal Affairs Research Assistant, Emily Nichol, is finalizing a background report and we are in consultation with Pauline Taggart to develop the online system to place on the MSU website.

Ryan and I attended a Rental Housing Sub-Committee meeting over the summer to advocate for landlord licensing. There is pushback from landlords on the committee, and council has delayed any funding to develop the program until the next budget cycle.

### **PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES**

Change Camp was a great success! Approximately 130 people were in attendance, with about half being students. We heard great feedback from participants and several students made valuable partnerships that will lead to future projects. Ryan Deshpande and I are now following up with the Office of Community Engagement to debrief and discuss next steps.

On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, Ryan and I delegated at a Planning Committee Meeting at City Hall against Councillor Aidan Johnson's proposal to further increase by-law enforcement in the communities surrounding McMaster. Despite our effort, the committee voted in favour of the motion and this will likely again be approved by council on October 11<sup>th</sup>. While this is disheartening, we are thankful for the support from Councillor Matthew

Green and Judi Partridge who opposed the motion. Additionally, we received media attention, which further amplified our voices. With my committee, we will consider next steps to prevent ill effects of this by-law program.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES**

My committee and I will now begin to work on the Municipal Budget Submission for the City. We hope to have this completed and distributed to City Hall by mid-November. Since this is the first time the MSU will be doing a budget submission for the city, there are many uncertainties that come with any new project. We will overcome this by looking at best practices in the University Budget Submission and municipal budget submission by other organizations in Hamilton.

Another new project that we will begin is the Council Summary Report. The goal of this project is to inform and engage the student body in municipal politics by updating them on major decisions made in City Hall. We are unsure how this will be received by students, but hope that the SRA will help us in promoting the update reports.

As for future meetings, I will be meeting with Debbie Dalle Vedove and Ward Six Councillor Tom Jackson to advocate for better transit for students living on the mountain. Finally, we are beginning conversations with Hamilton Police Services and Councillor Aidan Johnson about the increased amount of attempted break-ins in student housing. When planning how to solve this problem, we will remain cognizant of the complex feelings students have towards police and ensure these concerns are addressed.

### **CURRENT CHALLENGES**

Homecoming and the Dalewood Party created tension between the community and students and as a result the MSU. This will tarnish already strained relationships and may set us back in collaboration efforts. I will continue to attempt to build trust with our community associations. The party was also used as a derailment tactic in our efforts to prevent the expansion of the by-law program in communities near McMaster. While the issues are completely separate, City Councillors and the media paired the two together. It is likely that sensationalism surrounding the party will subside by this week, though we must always prepare for this topic to be brought up in any future meetings.

Additionally, the Planning Committee passed the motion to make the Mohawk Student By-Law Enforcement program permanent and to expand it from 2 co-op students to 4. It will likely be passed at City Council on Wednesday. This will increase tickets in the area and fines passed onto students. We will need to tackle this challenge accordingly. Ward 1 Councillor Aidan Johnson did not communicate to us that he was putting forward this motion to expand the by-law program. This demonstrates a lack of transparency and communication between him and the MSU. We are working to address these issues with him and his office.

### **VOLUNTEERS (Commissioners only)**

I am thankful to have a passionate committee that has brought great ideas to our past two meetings. We are looking forward to getting started on our upcoming projects. Unfortunately, there was a lack of attendance at our last meeting. However, I will work to overcome this challenge by reminding committee members about meetings more frequently and expressing the importance of attending.

### **SUCSESSES**

Ryan Deshpande and I have been in the papers, on television, and the radio several times last week expressing our concern about the increased by-law enforcement in the

McMaster communities. This demonstrates that Hamilton is interested in our opinions and that our advocacy efforts are not going unnoticed.

**OTHER**

This role is always filled with excitement and I love every moment of it. I believe it was an amazing decision to expand the MSU's municipal advocacy efforts and I am certain we will see incredible results throughout the year. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments do not hesitate to reach out to me at any time!

Best,

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