NEWS

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Friends of UNB Football tackle Lamrock

GORDON LOANE
THE BRUNSWICKAN

A spokesperson for the group 'Friends of UNB Football' is taking exception to remarks made in The Brunswickan last week by former UNB Student Union President and activist Kelly Lamrock.

Mike Dollimore said a proposal asking for an annual student levy of $10 to support a revitalised football program is certainly not an Alumni toy as Lamrock is suggesting.

"This isn't an Alumni toy, this is an alumni gift," said Dollimore.

"These are people who lived on this campus when football was here, were inspired by the game, it was part of their life," he said referring to some former football players who are backing the current initiative.

"I dare say that ninety per cent of the people who would donate to this initiative will probably see one game a year on the Homecoming weekend if they are able."

"Some will never see a UNB football game, but will be able to read about it in the newspaper or hear about it," said Dollimore.

"The students will be putting ten dollars into it and they are the ones who will benefit from it," he said, referring to the fact that all students will be admitted free to football games if a referendum now slated for February passes.

Dollimore also took exception to claims by Lamrock suggesting that his group has not been honest about what the real cost of a varsity football program is.

"Mr. Lamrock has his opinion and he is entitled to it."

"But we have been nothing but open and frank in what it costs."

"I don't believe there is any other campus budget that has been circulated so openly as the football budget," he emphasized.

Dollimore said Lamrock has not spoken to him or any member of his group to clarify any of these issues.

"He is making his statement and obviously doesn't have an awful lot of sense towards business," said Dollimore in referring to Lamrock's suggestion that his Alumni group should raise money before approaching students for a donation.

"What we are trying to do is put a program into place on an annual operating cost basis while we endeavour to accrue an endowment fund," he said.

"It is so much easier to achieve the latter by having the team on the field in the first place."

Dollimore also responded to concerns expressed in The Brunswickan last week from the Dean of Kinesiology Terry Haggerty.

He agrees with the Dean's comments about merit scholarships.

"No one's questioning that. We are not disputing that in any way," said Dollimore. "We have expressed that to Dr. Haggerty and he knows our feeling on that."

"Where we differ is that we refuse to reflect merit scholarships as an operating cost to the football program in which the university students are contributing a share," he pointed out.

Dollimore said merit scholarships should, and always have been, supported from Alumni donations and that is the way it should stay.

"We will have to endeavour to increase the amount coming from the Alumni scholarship, no question," he said.

Dollimore and his group are a little bit more mystified about Haggerty's comments that their budget estimates to start-up and operate a football program are too low.

"Our response is that we have worked with Athletic Director Jim Born to work out the numbers."

"The Dean still has some discrepancies but he has not chosen to sit down and go item by item with me, so I do not know why he feels they are too low," Dollimore said.

"It is my feeling that they are too low based on the lack of merit scholarships and I have expressed our position on that."

Dollimore and his group have also met with senior members of the Administration about the Football proposal, confirming meetings with UNB President Elizabeth Parr-Johnston and V.P. Academic Louis Visentin.

"Basically what they have told us is that they are concerned about costs and several issues and I understand that and respect them for being diligent in that area."

Dollimore said both officials have been non-committal as this point.

"They want to see what the say is from students. That would give us some grounds for further discussion," Dollimore concluded.

VP Academic: football more costly

GORDON LOANE
THE BRUNSWICKAN

UNB's Vice-President Academic Louis Visentin has become the second administration official to openly question a financial proposal aimed at reviving a varsity football program on the Fredericton campus.

The group "Friends of UNB Football" estimates it will cost $133,000 to start up the program and a further $110,00 in first year operational expenses.

UNB's Dean of Kinesiology Terry Haggerty has called those numbers not high enough and now Visentin agrees.

"I think the figures are quite a bit low," said Visentin in an interview with *The Brunswickan* this week.

"I would say the figures should be at least double what the 'Friends of UNB Football' are saying."

Visentin bases his estimate on past experience. He was very familiar with the cost of football programs at Saint F.X. and Mount Allison, prior to coming to UNB last year.

Visentin also said varsity football will not get his personal support unless an endowment fund is set up with enough money to run the program over the long term.

That might be a tall order.

Visentin estimates a football program costs around $200,000 a year to operate. With current interest rates in the five to six percent range, an endowment fund would then need four million dollars. Visentin agreed with these calculations this week.

"I am sympathetic to football and I certainly respect the dedicated UNB Alumni for their enthusiasm in trying to get the proposal going," said Visentin.

"But people should not confuse sympathy and empathy for strong support," he pointed out.

Visentin thinks a higher priority at UNB at the moment is to address the need for a general athletic facility.

"I think there are lots of needs on campus both academic and non-academic. In the non-academic area I am a strong believer in participatory athletics for everyone."

"Any program that comes in and detracts from that or takes money away from the existing programs I have problems with," he said.

Visentin points out that in the current fiscal climate the university administration must make the best of resources provided to it.

"There are consequences to the university as a whole should it wish to begin any new programs," he said.

Visentin likes to refer to the cascade effect of beginning new initiatives.

"Things happen here that affect things there," he said.

Meantime, UNB Student Union President Joie Hellmeister revealed the results of an informal survey she has been conducting in recent weeks on the costs of operating a varsity football program.

Hellmeister said she has contacted all the universities in the Maritimes where football is played - Mount Allison, Acadia, Saint F.X., Saint Mary's and has contacted officials at Dalhousie where efforts are currently under way to revive varsity football.

"I have had quotes anywhere between $80,000 to $200,000 a year to operate a football team," she said.

"The general consensus seems to be that the numbers being suggested by the 'Friends of UNB Football' are feasible."

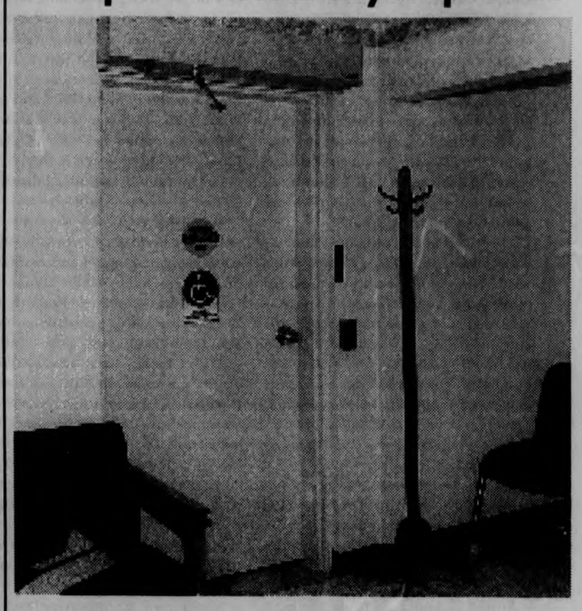
"People do raise questions about the condition of our field facilities, however," said Hellmeister.

The UNB Student Union President also revealed this week that a meeting has been scheduled for November 6th to get all the players involved in the football issue together.

Hellmeister said those involved in the meeting will include UNB President Elizabeth Parr-Johnston, the Friends of UNB Football, and representatives from the Student Union and the UNB Athletics Department.

"I want to go over the football budget being proposed with a fine-tooth comb," she said. "Questions are being raised about the proposed budget and I am taking these questions very seriously."

Campus accessibility improved



The door to the Health Centre is now open to students in wheelchairs.

ADAM ARGRAVES PHOTO

JENN BROWN
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Students with physical mobility problems should now find it easier to get around on campus. In previous years, some of the buildings on campus were difficult or impossible for students confined to wheelchairs to access. Many of the original buildings on campus were built prior to the change in building access codes. Now the University has to make the improvements necessary to ensure that these students can get to their classes.

Sandra Latchford, Coordinator of Services to Students with Disabilities, feels that it is important to make sure that all students have a chance to get a university education, regardless of their physical needs. "Our goal is to make the university accessible to all students, including students with disabilities."

In the last year, UNB has seen several improvements with regards to the accessibility issue. Marshall d'Avray Hall now has an automatic door in the back. Both the men's and women's wash rooms on the second floor have also been renovated. The dining areas in McLeod House and McConnell Hall have also been improved.

Another major improvement that has been made is to the Medical Clinic, located in Tibbits Hall. Until recently, students in wheelchairs or on crutches had a difficult time reaching the clinic, but now they can reach the clinic via an elevator located in the residence. The washroom and one of the doctor's offices are now accessible as well.

According to Latchford, the changes in the clinic came about when her department contacted Physical Plant to see what could be done. "The people at Physical Plant were very cooperative in helping us get the funding necessary to do the improvements. We received a grant from the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Committee, so we are finally able to make some much needed improvements."

A brochure detailing UNB's policy for students with disabilities is currently being printed. It can be found in room 214 of Marshall d'Avray Hall.

CHSR Program Manager's grievance heard, decision to be made today

MARY ROGAL-BLACK
THE BRUNSWICKAN

CHSR's Board of Directors will have a number of issues to consider when they meet this evening to make a decision on a grievance protesting the hiring of Station Manager Tony Sekulich.

Tristis Bhaird, CHSR's Program Manager, filed a grievance against the Board's decision to hire Sekulich, asserting that the hiring ignored the station's stated policy on employment equity "in passing over a qualified woman as the new Station Manager."

The recommendation of the six-member hiring committee to hire Tony Sekulich for the position of Station Manager was accepted by the Board on August 26. Bhaird filed her grievance on September 6.

The public hearing was held before a special meeting of the Board of Directors. It heard from several witnesses who were questioned by Bhaird and by members of the Board. The meeting was chaired by Andre Theriault, Chair of the Board.

In addition to the question of whether the hiring committee followed CHSR's Employment Equity policy, there was some dispute during the hearing about which description of the Station Manager position the committee considered during the selection process.



Tristis Bhaird

PAT FITZPATRICK PHOTO

There are three job descriptions in question, including one in the station's policy manual and one in the by-laws. The third job description, a summary of approximately 300 words written for the purpose of advertising the position, was the primary one referenced during the selection of the new Station Manager, according to several of the committee members who testified.

That seemed to add to the confusion about the hiring procedure.

At least one member of the committee spoke out strongly, stating that he was "troubled" and "dismayed" by the situation. Roy Nicholl was a membership representative on the hiring committee and said that after reviewing all of the applicants, he did not agree with the committee's decision.

"As the Board of Directors, you are bound to adhere to [the Employment Equity] policy when hiring any employee," said Nicholl. "This means that the policy cannot be set aside for the sake of convenience," he warned.

The Board of Directors heard testimony from several other members of the hiring committee about whether they considered CHSR's Employment Equity Policy when making their decision.

Committee Chair Colleen Comeau said the Employment Equity policy was not brought to the attention of the committee. "It was not discussed," she said.

Comeau said she did not feel it was necessary to bring the policy to the attention of other members of the hiring committee because there was a clear choice following the interviews. "I had confidence that the decision was fair, that the interview process was fair, that the deliberation was fair," said Comeau.

However, at least one member of the hiring committee stated that his decision may have been different had the Employment Equity policy been discussed in any depth during the selection process.

"The only question I've had and a question I've wrestled with is: would my decision about Tony have been different if we'd discussed the Employment Equity policy," said committee member Santo DiPietro in his statement to the Board. "That was very important and I see that in hindsight. I think my decision may have been different. He may not have been first."

DiPietro also stated that his decision was affected by concerns that, had Bhaird been the successful candidate for Station Manager, she would have left the position of Program Manager vacant.

"I believe that it would have been very hard for the Board to find another person [that had the voice of disadvantaged and minorities]. I didn't think anybody could do it as well as Tristis."

DiPietro, a membership representative on the committee, said he did consider that Bhaird met the minimum qualifications for the Station Manager position. "I would have been confident that she could have performed the job just as well as she does her own," he said.

However, DiPietro said Sekulich was his first choice because he made a good impression on the committee in terms of enthusiasm and the ability to improve morale and the image of the station in the university community.

Monique Scholten, UNB SU VP Finance, also testified that she prioritized the issues of morale and the station's image when making her decision because she has received some complaints from students about the value of supporting the radio station. Scholten said she was concerned about whether Bhaird would improve CHSR's image as Station Manager.

When asked by Board Member Joseph FitzPatrick (Brunswickan Managing Editor) if she knew how much control Bhaird had as Program Manager over the station's programming, Scholten responded, "I don't know. Why don't you tell me?"

Scholten also admitted at the hearing that she had never read CHSR's policy on Employment Equity.

"How do you know if you haven't read the policy that it wouldn't have changed your decision?" Bhaird asked.

"I assume I get the spirit of the thing," Scholten responded. She went on to say that while she didn't remember specifics of applicants' resumes, she went by a general impression of people skills and creativity.

Bhaird then took the opportunity to question Scholten and asked whether Scholten was aware of her efforts to have a volume control unit installed in the cafeteria so that students in the SUB could listen to CHSR.

"Was that a creative idea? Would you support that idea?" Bhaird asked.

"No," Scholten responded. "I don't like CHSR."

Scholten said that she was mainly concerned about complaints she's heard that students are unhappy paying fees for CHSR. Scholten said she was looking for a Station Manager who would make the station more attractive to more students.

Board Member M.K. Whitney responded to Scholten by asking her what kind of music she did like. "Do you listen to The Tragically Hip? That stuff starts on campus community radio," said Whitney. "We do serve a social purpose and students do care about social issues. I don't have children, but I am glad we have a daycare."

Scholten maintained that, based on her interest in improving station morale and image, making it more accessible to more students, she felt Sekulich was a good choice for the position of Station Manager. Asked about the difference in campus radio experience between Sekulich's and Bhaird, Scholten said she expected that Sekulich had the ability to learn those things he didn't know. Bhaird has been employed at CHSR since 1991. Sekulich was a volunteer at CHSR for one year.

Like Scholten, Comeau said that while Bhaird was her second choice when she ranked all of the short-listed candidates, she didn't believe that Bhaird met the minimum qualifications for the position because of concerns that she had contributed to a morale problem at the station in recent months.

"I had concerns from past experience with Tristis about whether she would have an amiable relationship with the Board," said Comeau.

Bhaird defended her relationship with the Board in her own statement. "The Board of Directors is my boss, collectively. I believe myself to be a company girl. While I can be fairly blunt with the Board of Directors, I do so in the spirit of the good of the company, of protecting the company," Bhaird stated.

Bhaird also responded to the comments of several members of the hiring committee who said that they had been particularly impressed by a document submitted by Sekulich with his application. The document, an action plan for the station, included Sekulich's plans for the news and sports departments. Committee members had said they felt the plan demonstrated Sekulich's enthusiasm and initiative.

Bhaird brought out three documents she has developed for CHSR in her capacity as Program Manager. "I don't think that the twelve-page document should qualify him as more enthusiastic," said Bhaird, who pointed out that Comeau, as a member of the Board, would have been aware of the documents during the candidate selection.

During her statement, Bhaird read from a memo sent to her from Sekulich following his hiring.

"As the new station manager, I will require training in certain technical aspects of CHSR-FM," the memo read. "Program Manager Tristis Bhaird will be responsible for providing this training. Training will be required in the following areas: basic operator training, full production training, newsroom equipment training, basic repair and maintenance training. The training should begin the week of September 9 and take as long as Ms. Bhaird deems necessary."

Comeau had also said she did not hold Sekulich's lack of technical experience against him because technical experience was listed in the job posting as an asset, not a required qualification for the position.

Bhaird also read prepared statement from hiring committee member Terry Thompson. In the statement, Thompson said he felt another qualified female candidate, Lisa Pardy, had been passed over for the position of Station Manager.

The remaining members of the hiring committee, UNB SU President Joie Hellmeister and STU SU President Carrie Ricker, did not testify. In her statement, however, Bhaird referred to former issues of The Brunswickan in which Hellmeister agreed that Bhaird is qualified for the position.

The hearing, which took over five hours, also heard testimony from K Brookland, who co-wrote the station's Employment Equity policy in 1989. "The women's group at the time was very concerned about the role of women in the future at CHSR and that's one of the reasons this policy was drafted," said Brookland.