

Bus pass decision to go to students

SARAH RATCHFORD
THE BRUNSWICKAN

For the first time in three years, UNB's undergraduate students will have the option to decide whether or not they would like to have a bus pass.

UNBSU VP External Jon O'Kane has been working with the city of Fredericton to negotiate a deal for students.

The result is a \$100 fee for a 12-month universal Fredericton Transit unlimited bus pass. The same amount of passes would otherwise cost students \$480.

O'Kane asked the city whether they would be willing to offer an opt-out for those students who do not wish to pay for the pass. This, however, was not possible.

"The city is not in a financial position where they would be willing to offer us an opt-out," said O'Kane at council on Monday.

As a result, the \$100 fee would be made mandatory for all undergraduate students.

A referendum will thus be held from Mar. 22 - 27 regarding a pass. The following question will be posed to students: "Do you support a 12 month municipal universal bus pass program at a mandatory fee of \$100 to be paid by all full-time undergraduate students on the Fredericton campus?"

The idea is that, since this is a simple yes or no question, students will be able to give a clear indication of whether or not they feel that the extra fee is worth it.

"I think it's a good idea to give our constituents the option whether or not they want it," said Business

representative Chris Gunter at council. "It would be nice for them to have the option to tell us."

St. Thomas students currently have a universal bus pass like the one being offered to UNB. They do not have the option of an opt-out, and they pay an extra \$100 for the service.

The STU administration, however, pays approximately \$25 of that fee.

"When negotiating with people in our administration," said O'Kane, "they outright said that they cannot financially support us up front for a subsidization."

Room could not be found within the operating budget, said O'Kane, unless an extra \$25 were to be tacked onto tuition - which would essentially be the same thing as students paying the full \$100.

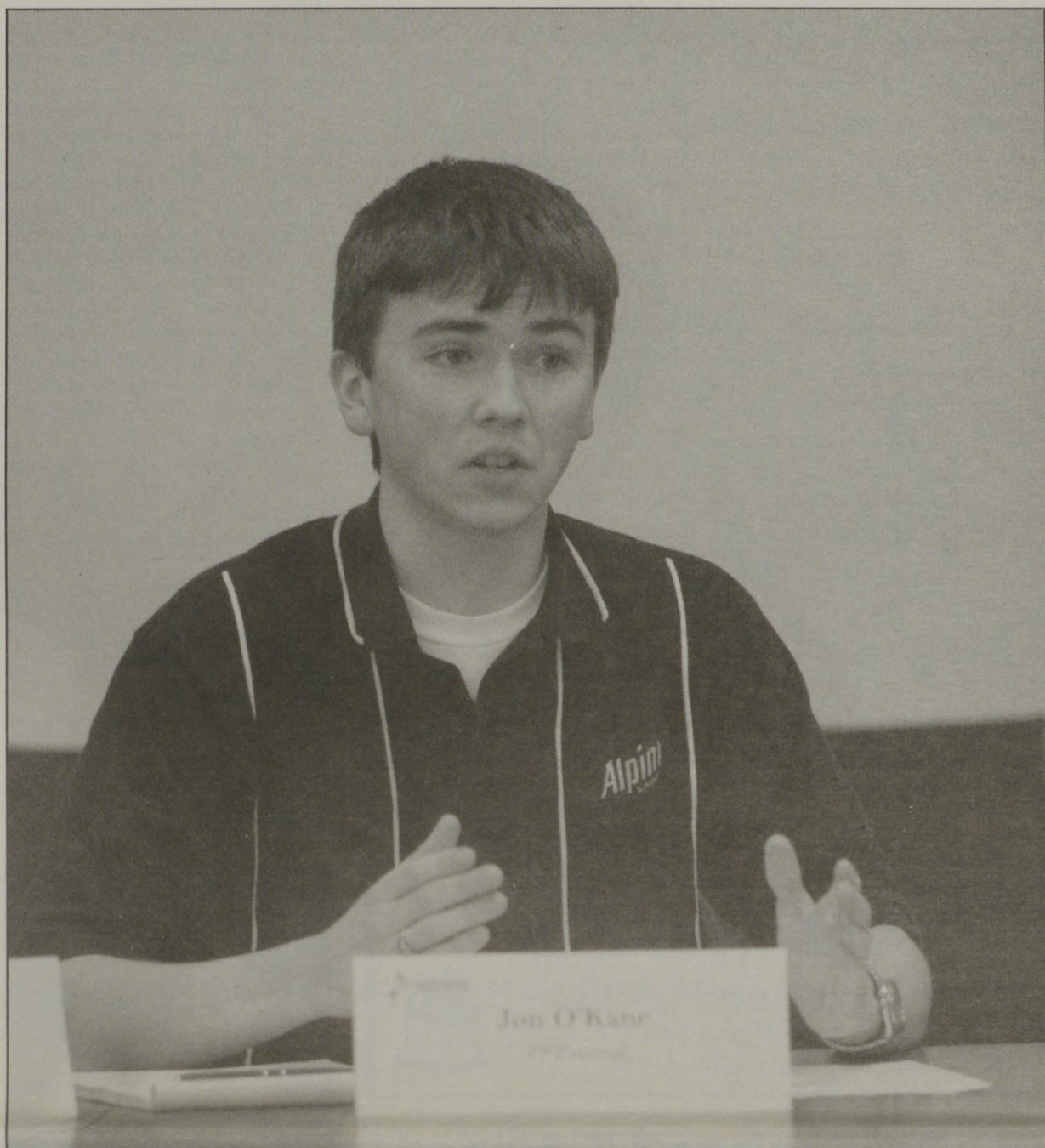
"This isn't the ideal situation. We would ideally want an opt-out," said SU President Bethany Vail.

"But I think it's something that has come forward. This is what you've asked for, and this what we have at this point in time. Let us know your thoughts. If you want it, great. If not, we'll continue to work hard for you to come up with better solutions."

O'Kane pointed out that both he and Vail will be out of town to attend a Canadian Alliance of Student Associations conference in Ottawa for the week of the referendum. As a result, students are encouraged to approach their respective councillors for information regarding the referendum.

It was decided that, for the results of the referendum to hold any weight, at least 15 per cent of eligible voters would have to make their voices heard.

The motion to ask students their opinion in the referendum was passed by council unanimously.



Andrew Meade / The Brunswickan

UNBSU VP External Jon O'Kane has negotiated with the city to get a deal on bus passes for UNB students. If students say they are for it in a referendum later this month, passes would cost \$100 per year.

ALPS to be next SUB tenant

HILARY PAIGE SMITH
THE BRUNSWICKAN

The Student Union Building is preparing to welcome its latest tenant: Adult Learners, Part-Time Students.

The SUB has undergone many changes this academic year. Two businesses, Travel Cuts and The Paper Trail, ended their tenancy, with the former relocating off-campus.

The Travel Cuts space was quickly revamped, becoming the Student Union's Welcome Center. ALPS has decided to take a similar route with the former Paper Trail location.

According to James Brown, director of Residence Life and Conference Services, ALPS has a similar goal in mind as the Student Union: to create a visible and accessible space for community members, and to generate more presence for their organization.

"They wanted a more high-profile location where people could find them basically, easily. They think they can do a better job of serving the interests of the mature and part-time student group if they were in a different location," says Brown.

ALPS is currently located in Marshall d'Avray Hall. They will continue to use this space, in addition to their new location.

The Paper Trail location was converted into a "blank slate" following its closure, says the director. The cost of further renovations will be absorbed by ALPS, as well as the leasing of the space.

Their Marshall D'Avray location includes a lounge area, computer lab and small resource library. The new location will just include furnishings like desks and counters.

It is principally an office area and welcome centre, with a staff member to be present at that location.

Until recently, the main floor of the SUB contained primarily retail tenants. Brown calls the inclusion of another student organization a good use of space, saying the group is welcome in the building.

He also includes that it benefits retail tenants, like SUB Towne and the Campus Shoppe, because it generates more student traffic and potentially, revenue for the businesses.

Immediately following the space's vacancy, ALPS approached the university to use the space. No other businesses were vying for the spot, says Brown.

A representative from ALPS refused to comment.

UNB Presidential search progresses

HILARY PAIGE SMITH
THE BRUNSWICKAN

UNB was introduced to their next potential president in mid-February, and vice versa.

Dr. H. E. A. Campbell, more commonly known as Eddy Campbell, is currently the acting President and Vice-Chancellor of Memorial University in Newfoundland. He is also the only nominee for UNB's 18th presidency.

Campbell was introduced to the Fredericton and Saint John campuses during his recent visit to the province. He met with various faculty, student and administrative groups.

Campbell also took part in an open meeting for all community members.

David Stevenson is the chair of the Joint Nominating Committee in the search for the next President. He says that a major factor in the committee's decision to select Dr. Campbell for the position is the feedback they receive from community members regarding Campbell's performance during his visit.

The feedback is in the form of comment cards that were filled the

weeks following the candidate's visit.

The committee chair says that the majority of the feedback he received following Campbell's were encouraging and positive. He added, however, that the comment cards must be considered.

The Joint Nominating Committee met on Mar. 9 to review the comments received and prepare their final report, says Stevenson.

"All indications were that [Dr. Campbell] was a very strong candidate for the university to consider," says Stevenson of the informal feedback he received.

Outgoing President John McLaughlin will be retiring at the close of this academic year. He says that he is very pleased with the nomination for the new President.

He also adds that the coming years will be exciting for the new President, saying that we are currently in a time of "deep change."

The economic downturn, as well as the societal and cultural changes that are reshaping Canadian life, will mean big changes for New Brunswick, says the outgoing President.

"Somebody had asked me what I thought about my time as President of UNB and I said I felt I had essentially one of the most interesting, and in many ways, I think one of the most important positions in the province

because universities are so important. It will be even more the case for the next President," says McLaughlin.

In a previous interview with the Brunswickan about his potential position, Campbell noted his awareness of the present government's desire to seek changes in the current university system. He said that he was interested in hearing what UNB community members have to say about the Post Secondary Education Action Plan and to listen to their concerns.

"I believe he was quite impressed with the responses he received and the questions that were put to him. He certainly understands the challenges in front of him," says Stevenson of his impressions of Campbell's visit.

Campbell's fate as President for the coming years of change will be decided this week.

The committee will follow their meeting on Monday with another this evening. The Board of Governors and Senate will meet to vote for or against Campbell's appointment as UNB's eighteenth President.

Stevenson suggested that the results should be completed by Friday and the committee will then proceed to make arrangements with Campbell.

The committee will proceed in other areas if there is no confirming vote, he says.