



Western Washington University Associated Students  
**Legislative Affairs Council**

November 17, 2016 6:00 PM VU567

**Members:** *Present: Bryce Hammer (ASVP for Governmental Affairs), Nora Selander (AS Legislative Liaison), Rosa Rice-Pelepko (AS REP Organizing and Outreach Coordinator), Galen Herz (Local Issues Coordinator), Leanna Sauerlender (Student at Large), Sarah Gallagher (Student at Large), Katherine VenDeWalker (Student at Large), Sofia Perry (Student at Large), Peter Condyles (Student at Large), and Lisa Rosenberg.*

*Absent:*

**Advisor:**

**Secretary:** Cora Cole

**Guests:**

**Motions:**

**LAC-16-F-8** Moved Environmental Lobby Day Information Item to an Action Item. *Passed*

**LAC-16-F-9** Approval of Funding for Environmental Lobby Day publicity. *Passed*

*Bryce Hammer called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM, November 17th*

**I. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

A funding for request for publicity for the Environmental Lobby Day under information items

**II. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**A.** Environmental Lobby Day: Anna requested \$30. Bryce updated to \$110 to increase outreach capacity. There isn't enough for \$80 banners, but the cheaper non-water resistant ones ought to be fine. If they don't use all of the funds it will stay in the LAF. The committee proposed to increase funding just in case they need more funds.

*Galen Herz entered at 6:10 Pm with tiny sandwiches.*

**MOTION: LAC-16-F-8** By Selander

Motion to move the Environmental Lobby Day funding to an action item.

Second: Gallagher Vote: 7-0-0 Action: Passes

**III. ACTION ITEMS**

***MOTION: LAC-16- By Selander***

Motion to approve funding not exceeding \$200 for the Environmental Lobby Day publicity.

Second: Herz                      Vote: 7-0-0      Action: Passes

**IV.      DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- a. USSA membership: Bryce explained that the WSA used to be a part of the USSA, recently the WSA decided to remove membership. Western decided to remain a direct member at a much lower fee (40 cents per student per year) coming out of the LAF. We have funded travel to conferences and meetings with the USSA in recent years. We joined them because they were better at organizing students on campuses than the WSA and they offered more support for students of color. Recently they have lost the staff that helped them function that way, decreasing their advocacy and organization. Schools have been pulling out and we need to decide if we want to keep being members. Rosa asked what they were doing about things. Bryce said that they want a \$1 per student per quarter fee on each campus, but because they don't have much. They usually send the invoice around winter break so now is key for deciding whether we want to remain. We had a Board member of the USSA last year, and her and the folks who had been to conferences said that the benefit had been support by the organizers. So once that staff and the switch to online conferences made that advantage significantly less. Bryce asked Lisa what is going on with the Board because they are the ones who make the decision but LAC is the group who pays the dues. Lisa said that it was a weird set up, but since the Board initiated membership, they must also discontinue. Additionally, the membership this year would not be at the discontinued rate. Rosa said that if we pull out we should dedicate the funds to advocacy for students of color. Bryce said that we would have a dedicated fund for that advocacy and we could put additional funds there. There will be action next meeting on the issue.
- b. Local Lobby Day: Galen outlined on the whiteboard issues that were on the last local lobby day agenda. Issue one being Housing Affordability and Quality. The battle is largely that homeowners and single family neighborhoods don't want new development and do want zoning laws. The other side has complaints about vacancy rates being low and pricing rates being gouged. In the Birchwood neighborhood there is lower income, more people of color, and less educational opportunities. April 0—wants an integrated Bellingham with less regulation on housing and more equity for schools. The neighborhood associations are largely wealthy folks with lots of time on their hands so they are well organized and can control the city council pretty well. Students are affected because their prices are gouged and they end up living in multiplex housing. The three or more unrelated by blood law bans would be addressed by having better representation of a renters commission with protected seats for students. There is also a renter's commission which is similar to the Neighborhood association but for renters, that could have protected seats for students. This agenda item is in progress, because they are still trying to decide how much they want to compromise in the initial proposal.

Issue two being Equity and Inclusiveness. The first item is making Bellingham a Sanctuary City as proposed by the WWU Blue Group this Tuesday. April Barker pushed for this and the city council is looking into it. Another issue is a Civilian Oversight Board Over Tocal Police, which a bunch of cities are doing to limit excessive force and racial profiling. Example, BPD handed over a 15-year-old to ICE, after pulling him over, violating their own laws against ICE cooperation. A third item would be banning Conversion Therapy, Bryce recommended banning it in the county instead. Another item was a racial equity toolkit modeled after the one that Seattle applied to all of their programs recently. Also, a city resolution not to cooperate with national government on any Muslim registration process. Sarah asked what the process is for getting this involved, Galen said that we pass the agenda, go to the local lobby day in February and then show up to city council until it happens. Youth Participatory Board, Seattle has funds that allow youth to vote on and then instate policy and he would like to see something similar in Bellingham.

Issue Three is Public Health and Safety: Lack of lighting and sidewalks for scared students. Additionally, more parking and those call/bus stations off of campus.

The Fourth Issue is about voting access. Including prepaid ballot postage and a county based law allowing non-citizens to vote.

Galen was applauded and asked for feedback. The three or more rule is tied to single family zoning so addressing that would inflame the conflict about the housing restrictions. He said that more housing stalk would make that and other problems lessen. Bryce and Rosa talked about having a Mini-Vote item in the agenda for the county. The county wide agenda is pretty hard for Galen to advocate for, for a variety reason. City level the problem is that homeowners have more power and time. The MNAC is all old white people so Bryce and Galen would like to see students running to represent their neighborhoods. Bryce asked about furniture on streets, the item on the agenda had been mostly admonishing of students, the programs to deal with that are already in place. Bryce asked who Bellingham banks with and they bank with US Bank, the NODAPL folks have requested a switch to a credit union and the city has their hands tied, but there are 15 accredited credit unions in Washington state. That was added to the agenda to become a Fifth Financial Issue category. Galen asked if there was anything we could be doing to recommend fund reallocation. Rosa added that we could advocate for food security. Bryce asked for final suggestions, Sara asked if we could do something about public bathrooms for people experiencing homelessness. There are currently 7 of them and all but one of them are in parks. To get backing for issues, we should have a survey for the Lobby Day.

- c. Bryce added that the Board would like to see the Legislature Packet as we would present it to the Legislatures. Nora cannot do that all right now, because she is very overwhelmed. Bryce said that we could either get that done this week and give it to the Board next week or we could do it over break and give it to the Board when we get back. Lisa asked if they had any complaints, Bryce said that they only wanted a couple statistics, mostly they work over the specific

wording of the packet. Bryce said that she would be willing to work on it with people next week as she will be in town over Thanksgiving Break. We will then approve it on the google docs at the end of break and have the Board approve it the Wednesday of Quiet Week.

**Y. REPORTS**

- A. Nora** reported that she has been talking with Senator Ryker's aids about a bill for sexual assault survivor support. We will know more after the Senate committee appointments happen in two weeks. The Governor's office is looking into automatic voter registration on higher ed campuses so she has a potential meeting with Paul Sekerson on that subject soon and perhaps getting some input from administration. WSA is this weekend so she is putting together the agenda for that. She is looking at getting a congressional sponsor for the ESC next year.
- B. Galen** reported that he had a city council meeting on Monday, the Blue Group spoke and there was a lot of lash back from the racists. He is meeting with city council members to hammer out a day for local lobby day. He wants to have an event with students and community members off campus in winter to discuss the housing crisis. Possibly he would also like to see a person from Seattle to talk about their movements. Nora mentioned that she would like to work with Seattle leadership on sanctuary city status.
- C. Rosa** reported that she would like to make goals for winter and spring, possibly running a campaign with students. She would like to be a resource for the VOTE portion of the Western Lobby Day agenda and encouraged all of the committee members to come and help out. She wants to put on an event with a VIP to talk about grassroots and direct action organizing.
- D. Bryce** Reported that she had sent out the campus wide email for the Western Lobby Day application and there have been 72 students who applied so far. She got a call from the Satellite campus in Everett where someone wanted to attend. Francesca is the new Board Assistant. Rosa is making handbills. The WSA is this weekend and there are two available seats if people want to go. Additionally, the REP is still recovering from their recent chaos.
- E. Sarah** mentioned that the Washington Education Association is having a march on the capital the same weekend as Western Lobby Day and attendees could also go to that.

***Bryce Hammer adjourned the meeting at 7:30 PM***