

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

Monday, January 23, 2012

VU567

**Present:** Uis Maute-Gibson (AS VP Governmental Affairs, Chair), Kevin Majkut (advisor), Joe Meyer (Legislative Liaison), Patrick Stickney (Vice Chair), Ean Olsen (Student Senate Representative), Katherine Barnard, Chris Brown, Ben Crowther, Jared McCardle, Carmen Winquist, Fiona Yau-Luu

**Absent:** Chris Savage

**Secretary:** Katie Savinski

## MOTIONS

**L-12-W-02** Approval of the minutes of Monday, January 9, 2012 *Passed*

**Iris Maute-Gibson, Chair for Legislative Affairs Council, called the meeting to order at 4:06p.m.**

## I. CALL TO ORDER

## II. REVISIONS TO AGENDA

## III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*MOTION L-12-W-02 by Stickney*

*Seconded by Barnard*

Approval of the minutes of Monday, January 9, 2011

Vote: 8 - 0 - 0                      Action: Passed

## IV. REPORTS

### A. AS VP for Governmental Affairs

*(Chris Brown Entered)*

Maute-Gibson reported that there was a Washington Student Association meeting last week. She said that April 16th-20th is when lobbying for the federal agenda begins. Working on the LAC Federal Agenda will be the committee's next project.

### B. AS Legislative Liaison

Meyer reported that activity down in Olympia was slow due to inclement weather.

### C. Western Votes

Stickney said that Western Votes is hosting a phone banking operation later in the week.

### D. Student Senate

Olsen said that the senate did not meet last week. They will be meeting this week and will discuss the Cherry Point terminal as well as gendered bathrooms, and the Occupy Wall Street movement's effect on education.

## VI. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

### A. Lobby Day Debrief

Maute-Gibson saw that this year's Viking Lobby Day was very successful as far as students having a positive impact on legislators, as well as empowering themselves. Legislators reported that they were very impressive that students were so engaged to lobby upon their own means as well as that of the legislative agenda. She also explained that she sent a huge thanks to the Bell-Air for their travel cooperation with the inclement weather. She explained that 2012 Viking

Lobby Day was so successful because of the number of students involved in a record number of legislative meetings. Meyer gave a huge thanks to the students who showed endurance with the number of meetings. Crowther thanked Maute-Gibson for her hard work. Maute-Gibson said that LAC members should encourage future involvement within their friends and fellow lobbyists.

## **B. WSA Bills**

Maute-Gibson requested that the committee research the bills located on the WSA Bills document. At the next meeting, the committee will vote on which bills they want to prioritize taking a stance on. Maute-Gibson especially wanted to look out House Bill 2313. The bill “concerns the meeting procedures of the boards of trustees and boards of regents of institutions of higher education.” The WSA supports this bill. MG explained that there would be a required public comment period at Board of Trustees meetings. This follows the belief that students should be able to express their feelings at any time. She said that there is a concern that students may be trying to speak on issues where decisions have already been made, which is disconcerting to them. This would change the way that students communicate with the Board of Trustees. The WSA has voted to support this bill, but AS President Anna Ellermeier asked for Maute-Gibson to bring this bill to the committee to make a decision on whether or not Western will be taking a stance on this. Brown supports this bill. Crowther also supports the bill and he encouraged others to be in support. Olsen explained that there was a public comment section offered at the board meetings at his community college. This eliminated some of the hostility that comes with not being able to voice opinions. Olsen supports it. Stickney would like more information. Maute-Gibson said that she would vote against supporting this because she thinks it might have a negative impact on student voice. This will be voted on next week. Another House Bill, 2345 “creates a higher education registration priority for eligible veterans and national guard members.” Maute-Gibson explained that this bill was written by a Western student. The administration has come out against this bill. The WSA came out in a neutral stance. Evan Knappenberger arrived to speak on behalf of the bill. He explained that only 1 in 20 veterans use the GI Bill to continue their education, and many show signs of suicide behaviors after serving. He felt that the passing of this bill would assist in the undoing of the prejudice veterans feel about going to a university. He expressed his in difficulty signing up for classes and maintaining contact with Western officials on his enrollment in Western; he was dropped from enrollment at one point uninformed. He thinks this bill would be a step towards getting more veterans involved in completing a higher education. Crowther said that he’ll have to think a lot about this bill. He does not agree with it as acting as incentive to bring people into higher education. Stickney said he will definitely have to think about this bill as well. Maute-Gibson said that she is so far against all three of these bills. Brown said he is concerned with so many people being allowed to have priority registration. Barnard said there is a lot of hoop jumping to get priority registration. Stickney said he wanted the committee to discuss SB 6322 “allowing nonprofit institutions recognized by the state of Washington to be eligible to participate in the state need grant program.” This would make it so students who chose to go to “Western Governor’s University,” not having to be a Washington resident, receive priorities concerning the state need grant. Stickney said that he believed that since there are many people not being served by the state need grant as it is currently being serviced, he opposes this addition. Maute-Gibson said that she hoped that by coming out in strong opposition alongside the Western faculty will prove their desires. Crowther asked the committee to look at HB 6231 “concerning civil marriages and domestic partnerships.” He explained that this bill is an issue of higher education affordability because of the complexity of financial aid award information pertaining to the parents on the FAFSA and tax returns. He said that this overcomplicates and distorts information going out for financial aid need. Crowther said that he would like to support this. Majkut asked if this bill would affect FAFSA. Crowther said no, but that it is a step along the way. Maute-Gibson explained that as bills are taken a stance on by FAC, they will be passed to the Board of Directors. Olsen

commented that the student senate will be looking to draft a resolution on this bill as well. Maute-Gibson said she would not feel comfortable bringing this issue to the Board if it were not in the form of a Resolution. Stickney requested the committee look at HB 2563 “establishing a state tax on capital gains.” Meyer said that the WSA is really looking into revenue issues. Maute-Gibson said that she will send out a list of bills that they will be watching.

**Y. ACTION ITEMS**

**VII. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**VIII. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**XI. OUTSIDE OF COMMITTEE WORK**

**X. NEXT MEETING DATE:** January 30, 2012 5:28m VU 567

**XI. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED BY ACCLAMATION AT 04:37 P.M.**