

**Western Washington University Associated Students
Legislative Affairs Council
Monday, April 28, 2014 VU 567**

Present: Kaylee Galloway (ASVP for Governmental Affairs), Matthew Bobbink (Legislative Liaison), Joseph Levy (Local Liaison), Oscar Aguirre, Nie Doherty, Danny Edgel, Blake Bishop, Theo Bickel, Maia Hanson, Patrick Eckroth, Jazzy Smith, and Sarah Kohout

Absent: Heather Heffelmire (Western Votes! Representative)

Advisor: Kevin Majkut

Secretary: Amy Kleitsch

Kaylee Galloway, Chair of Legislative Affairs Council, called the meeting to order at 4:06pm

I. Call to Order

II. Additions and Changes to the Agenda

III. Approval of the Minutes

IV. Public Forum

V. Reports

A. VP for Governmental Affairs

Galloway wanted to commend those who attended and participate in the Diversity Is rally this afternoon. 2 dittos.

B. Legislative Liaison

Bobbink is starting to organize a legislative event that he and Kaylee are putting on. He finished his final report on the legislative session that he is going to present to the Board of Directors. He is also excited to train the new legislative liaison. Galloway added that this event will be on May 14th. She said this event is in the preliminary planning stages, but she knows as of now Representative Rick Larsen is going to come to campus.

C. Local Liaison

Levy said there is going to be a week of action from May 12th to May 16th. Levy said the mayor presented her new rental safety proposal. Levy, Theo Bickel, Kaylee Galloway, and Samantha Goldblatt attended a meeting with Jack Weiss where they talked to community members about what they did and did not like about this proposal. Levy said they are going to have another one of these meetings on Thursday, and hopes these meetings will be a weekly occurrence. He said the point of these meetings are to discuss how they can change the mayor's proposal and make in better. He has high hopes that the proposal is going to get passed and hopefully by July they will see rental ordinances passed. Galloway gave kudos to Levy, Bickel, and Goldblatt for all the work they put into rental safety advocacy and proposal ordinance this year.

D. Western Votes!

Kohout is filling in for Heather Heffelmire. She said they are working with Bellinghorne on their campaign. She mentioned that the Western Votes! elections are approaching and if the

committee is interested, they should attend the next meetings. She said on nominations will be on May 5th and the actual elections will be on May 12th. She said some point throughout the quarter they will be doing a USSA student teach-in. Galloway added that the WS A General Assembly is going to this weekend at Central Washington University. She said last Friday was the 2 year anniversary of when student debt reached 1 trillion dollars. Kohout did class raps regarding this topic and is still in the process of doing them.

VI. Information Items

A. Vote Project Funding Request (Doc. 1)

Galloway and Graham Marmion, AS REP Associated Director, attended a meeting with the Elections Division of the Whatcom County Auditor's office regarding voter turnout. She said based on statistics from the Auditor's office, she came to the conclusion that the youth vote has by far the lowest voter turnout rate in the county. She would like to increase their get out the vote efforts, and thinks an institutional field plan for an enhanced get out the vote effort would be beneficial. She said the Vote Coordinator last year prepared a voter registration field plan. She said the goal of this proposal is to bring back the 2013 Vote Coordinator to prepare a similar plan, but specifically for Get Out The Vote. She said this is one of the largest components of the voter registration drive that could use some improvement. She said they would approve through the personnel committee to appoint Caylyn Rolph-Tate for 30 hours to work on this field plan. She said the committee would be responsible to fund this project. She is requesting a not to exceed amount of \$300 from the legislative action fund. She mentioned that \$1,000 allocated to send Matthew Bobbink to Washington DC was unused and thinks this would be a great alternative investment. She said they would like to do this now rather than later because Rolph-Tate has been part of the voter registration effort for the last 2 years and thinks it would be beneficial to put together this field plan before some of the institutional knowledge that has been a part of Western Votes! graduates. Galloway said Rolph-Tate would be working from the beginning of May until about dead week. Kohout wondered if this would give Rolph-Tate and the new Vote Coordinator an option to do an internship if they are hired by that point. Galloway said the goal would be to have Rolph-Tate complete the field plan in the allotted time or less, and any of the hours left over could be allocated to an internship. Doherty wondered if they planned to include the new Vice President for Governmental Affairs in this process. Galloway said it would be a good opportunity to include her successor in this process. Levy thinks it is a good idea to have the internship available, and thinks it would be beneficial for the next person in this job. He thinks adding an extra 5 hours to this proposal to ensure Rolph-Tate would have an opportunity to talk to the new vote coordinator. He moves to amend this request to not exceed an amount of \$350 and add 5 more hours to this proposal. Seconded by Kohout. 10-0-0. Passed. Galloway will bring the amended document to the committee next week.

VII. Action Items

VIII. Discussion Items

A. USSA Follow-up (Doc. 2)

Galloway said that after the committee meeting last week, she got in contact with USSA VP Maxwell Love in regards to the questions that were posed at the last meeting. Kohout asked if the personnel salary section in this document doesn't include all the other staff in the organization. Galloway believes this budget is only the revenue generated from membership dues. She guesses they receive grants that aren't reflected in this document, but she will confirm this with Maxwell Love. She gives kudos to Patrick Eckroth for helping put this document together. Eckroth said there seems to be a lot of inconsistencies in their budget of

what they approve and what they spend. Galloway noticed this, but when talking to Maxwell he mentioned that some grants they have are coming to an end. She thinks the newly approved budget may reflect revenue that they might not be getting. She will also inquire about grants they have and know if they are spending out of their means. Doherty thanked Kaylee for acquiring this document. 2 ditto. He wondered if USSA has unpaid interns or if they are paid with grants because these positions don't show up in this document. Galloway said there were three internships last summer, but doesn't know if there are internships right now and will look into this. Levy is interested in how they budget. He said there are supplies they spent a lot of money on this year, but next year they are budgeting no money towards these things. Edgel wondered what USSA is doing in regards to outreach strategies that deemed aggressive and how do they define a campus as friendly. Galloway believes they have identified and targeted campuses who are the most like to express interest in direct membership to USSA. Levy wondered why some students would not want to join this organization if its goal is to support students. 1 ditto. Galloway said they might consider friendly SSA's being the ones who are just starting to form. She said there are no SSA's that exist that aren't members of USSA at the moment. She said there are states with campuses who are trying to form SSA's and USSA might see this as an opportunity to target and recruit those campuses. Hanson asked if Galloway could give context about why WSA might withdraw from USSA. Galloway mentioned that a campus and their satellite campus came to the table about financial and ideological problems they had with USSA. She said their argument was that WSA was operating on a tight budget and saw USSA as a line item that was less of a necessity than other line items. She said this school was coming from a more conservative campus, and felt their ideologies weren't being represented adequately. She said this school thought USSA wasn't a good investment for the WSA. Doherty said without this school being a part of WSA, there wouldn't be enough funding for an Organizing Director and their resources will be severely limited. Galloway said this campus offered an ultimatum to either withdraw from USSA or they would leave WSA. She said the current fiscal impact on WSA from USSA is \$11,000. She said if they were to respectfully request to stay in WSA and lose this campus, then WSA would take a large financial hit and potentially lose a staff member. She said another reason they wanted to pull out of USSA was because they wanted to see a reduction in WSA membership dues. She said they believed withdrawing USSA membership would provide a greater opportunity for entry to their other satellite campuses and in turn generate more revenue and get more students involved. Doherty wondered if this campus pulled out of USSA, if USSA would allow Western Washington University and Central Washington University to share joint membership. Galloway said these conversations haven't happened yet, but the idea is on the radar. Edgel wondered what would happen with LegCon and Congress if WSA dropped their USSA membership. Galloway said they would lose all contact with USSA along with all the benefits and resources they had with this organization. She said nonmembers can still go to conferences, but they would go these conferences at a greater cost. Majkut added that they would also lose the ability for Western students to hold office positions and in turn wouldn't be able to impact the direction of the organization. Galloway added that Western currently holds 3 vice chair positions out of all the caucus spaces, and if they weren't apart of USSA, they would lose out on this. She recommends the committee to refer back to the March 24th documents because it answers a few questions that were posed in the past few meetings. Doherty wondered if USSA generally has interest in direct membership from non-research universities. Galloway said the research institutions tend to be bigger and may have more funding available to them. Doherty wondered if the LAF referendum was to get pass, if the committee would make the decision to become direct members with USSA. Galloway explained that if the students vote to approve the LAF restructure, it has to go through a few steps on the administrative side. She

said the fee restructure would have to get passed by the Board of Trustees and she would have to work with the administration to implement an infrastructure for the opt-out process. She would like to draft and establish a Legislative Action Fund policy and would like to establish discretionary and nondiscretionary funds within the budget, so they would be able to establish the WSA membership dues as nondiscretionary and have it be a line item in their budget. She added that if they were to invest in direct membership to USSA, she would like to have this established in the non-discretionary budget. She said this committee ultimately has authority over the budget, but the AS Board of Directors is the body who has the authority to become direct members with USSA. She said the funding would be taken care of through the LAF. Edgel wondered if the Board of Directors would be able to run a referendum in the future regarding direct membership to USSA. Galloway said they would be able to pass this as either a resolution or referendum. Bickel likes the idea of running a referendum to get more students on campus involved and to make it more legitimate. He thinks it's important for students to get involved and to see they have an impact on whether or not Western has direct membership with USSA. 1 ditto. Galloway thinks doing a referendum would be the next best thing if a resolution doesn't get passed by the Board. She thinks they should get stuff done now opposed to trying to get it done next year. Aguirre believes doing a referendum would resolve a lot of uncertainties regarding this topic. 1 ditto. Doherty thinks the way the referendum was written implied they would need to join a federal student organization in order to increase student representation at a state and federal level. He said if students choose to allot more funds towards federal representation through the referendum, the best way to do this is through USSA. He thinks that direct membership to USSA would be more cost effective than sending more students to Washington DC. 1 ditto. He thinks after the referendum regarding the LAF restructure, the Board of Directors would have the student say they need in order to join USSA without running a separate referendum. Galloway added that there aren't a lot of alternatives to USSA. Edgel thought the way the LAF referendum was worded did not imply these funds would be used to join USSA. He talked to students about this topic over the weekend and they thought the LAF restructure meant there would be more lobby trips. Galloway said the language used to craft the referendum was flexible and people have different interpretations to what student representation at a federal level is. Edgel thinks they get enough utility out of USSA right now without having direct membership. He thinks that a referendum that clearly states that they want to use the LAF to gain direct membership with USSA is the only way to not feel awful about this. Galloway thinks a referendum is a great route to take next year if direct membership doesn't pan out this year. She said Western's involvement with USSA this year in terms of attendance for conferences is unprecedented. She said the increase involvement comes with an expense and if the LAF restructure is not passed, they won't be able to send as many people to conferences as they were able to this year. She expressed to USSA early on that she was interested in direct membership and thinks Western has been receiving more direct benefits because of this. Aguirre wonders if any outreach has been done to the schools that have decided to get direct membership to discuss why they decided to invest in direct membership. He thinks it would be interesting to hear the opinions of the schools that have already gone through the process that LAC is going through tight now. Eckroth suggested reaching out to Mayra Guizar because of the connections she has made through USSA. Galloway added that Maxwell Love might have access to contact information, so she will inquire about this. Aguirre wondered if they could ask the campuses who have recently become direct members if they have felt an increase in resources and how much of an impact they feel from USSA direct membership. He added that they should try and talk to UW Madison about why they pulled out of direct membership and then chose to rejoin. Galloway said when she looks at USSA she looks at the benefits they get from USSA along with the benefits they give to USSA. She said Western

gives USSA the benefit of being good organizers, having strong voices, and being smart and passionate students. She said they give benefits that allow the organization to foster and strengthen. She said she likes to think of this partnership in terms in receiving and giving benefits. Edgel mentioned that the conversation keeps going back to whether or not USSA is a good or bad organization. He thinks these conversations should be more about how they go about with their involvement with the organization. He thinks they should be careful taking the reins on student voices without running a referendum.

5:28p. m. Smith left the meeting

Doherty said their total expense for conferences in \$85,000 and their organizing and advocacy efforts has been \$3,000. He said sending students to these conferences is incredibly useful, but they need to question whether sending these student leaders to these conferences is the same as giving USSA money as a membership fee just so students would be given the opportunity to serve on the organization's board. 1 ditto. Kohout said a referendum would take about a year, which would decrease Western's federal representation. She said it seems like a lot of wasted time if they wait a year to join USSA. She said USSA isn't going to be going anywhere in the next year, but during this year Western wouldn't be participating in USSA. Levy said being free riders for one year would be worth it in order to hear student input. Galloway doesn't want the committee to feel burdened by the decision to be direct members because ultimately the Board of Directors makes this decision. She will also inquire about whether they chose to be direct member with WSA through a resolution or a referendum.

B. Preliminary Legacy Document Discussion

Galloway said this is something new that LAC has never done before. She would like to leave words of wisdom to their successors. She thinks people should start brainstorming their experience on the committee. She said can include topics like policies, budgeting, and ethnics. She said they can also include things they did this year along with things they didn't do this year. Galloway said every LAC member and AS Vice President for Governmental Affairs would read this. She predicts this documents being around 15 to 20 pages or about 1 to 1 1/2 pages per person. Blake thinks it is important to have a legacy document and for people on the committee to read this. 1 ditto. Galloway would like the Legacy Document to include proposals, resources, and policies. She thinks they should critique the issue choosing process and if this is the best way to do this. She said these are the things that should be included in this document. Doherty wondered how to move forward with this. Galloway would like the committee to bring to the table a few things they would like to include in this document.

IX. Other Items

X. Next Meeting Date

- May 5, 2014

X. Adjourn

The Meeting was adjourned at 5:42p.m.