

**Western Washington University Associated Students
Legislative Affairs Council
Monday, May 12, 2014 VU 567**

Present: Kaylee Galloway (ASVP for Governmental Affairs), Heather Heffelmire (Western Votes! Representative), Matthew Bobbink (Legislative Liaison), Oscar Aguirre, Nie Doherty, Danny Edgel, Theo Bickel, Maia Hanson, Patrick Eckroth, and Sarah Kohout

Absent: Joseph Levy (Local Liaison), Blake Bishop

Advisor: Kevin Majkut

Secretary: Amy Kleitsch

Guest: Julie Anne Behar

MOTIONS

LAC-14-S-07 Approve the Resolution Regarding Direct Membership with the United States Student Association as Amended. *Passed.*

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

Doherty would like to move the information item USSA Direct Membership to an Action Item. Moved by Doherty. Seconded by Kohout. 10-0-0.

III. Approval of the Minutes

IV. PUBLIC FORUM

V. REPORTS

A. VP for Governmental Affairs

Galloway doesn't have anything to report at this meeting.

B. Legislative Liaison

Bobbink needs to call parking services to get Rick Larsen's parking pass. Galloway added that Rick Larsen is going to be on campus tomorrow for the Ask a Congressmen event. She said this event will be from 1:30 to 2:30 in VU 565 A and B. She encourages everyone to attend if they can.

C. Local Liaison

Bickel spoke on behalf of Joseph Levy. Bickel said today is the first day of Bellinghorne's Week of Action. He said this will be tabling every single day this week. He said they are gathering petitions to raise awareness about the issues that going on inside City Council and about the Mayor's registration policy. He said they have also been collecting rental stories. He has been talking to a lot of people on campus, and many people have been very supportive as soon as they hear about them. He added that next Monday at 7pm City Council will be meeting and will discuss the policy they want to see passed. He said they are going to host an event on campus that day at 5pm where they will walk down to the City Council meeting, pack the halls, and show student support for this. In the coming weeks they hope to raise awareness about this issue by doorbelling in rental heavy neighborhoods. He also would like to continue

petitioning on campus to show City Council members that they would really like to see this passed. His initial impression was that things would get voted on very quickly, but as things are changing it appears that this would get voted on when students are gone for summer. Galloway added that if anyone is interested in tabling, to contact Theo Bickel.

D. Western Votes!

Heffelmire said they are getting ready to wrap up Western Votes. She said Western Votes is going through a structural change. She said they are changing, eliminating, adding, and merging positions together. She said this would be the focus of the meeting. She added that Bellinghome will also be discussed at this meeting as well.

VI. Information Items

A. Legislative Action Fund

■ Policy (Doc. 2)

Doherty said with the increase in funding that will come from the opt-out scenario, the Legislative Affairs Council is going to be overseeing a larger budget. He said in order to be more organized with the change in the budget, he created this document. He separated out the types of expenses into nondiscretionary funds and discretionary funds. He thinks that WS A membership and personnel costs will constitute as nondiscretionary funds. He added that these nondiscretionary expenses would be approved by the Board of Directors at a certain level and from then on the VP for Governmental Affairs will have authority to spend up to the level the committee sets without coming back for approval every year. He said this will free up time so they would be able to focus more on legislation. He said 10% of the discretionary funds would be moved into the reserves. He spoke with Kaylee Galloway and Morgan Burke about desired reserve levels. He thinks that \$35,000 would be a sufficient amount to place in the reserves. He thinks this would be enough to cover any expanded costs if dues or other costs increase. He said once the reserves reached \$35,000, they would stop moving money into the reserves unless they dip below \$35,000. He said this is a rough draft he came up with today, so these numbers are up for consideration. He added that the budget and policy were not done together. He said there is some discontinuity, so they can change things if needed. Galloway recommends integrating some of the language that currently exists on the Budget Center of the AS website. She thinks it's important to mention that the Board of Directors are the only body that has authority to make the WSA membership dues non-discretionary. She thinks that \$35,000 for the reserves is a good, healthy number. Majkut thinks that \$35,000 seems like a lot of money for the reserves for a \$49,000 budget. He thinks it's good to have reserves, but when taxing students you want to return the money they paid through services and programs to the students. He added that the AS in their strong reserves about a 20% reserve. He said this is based on being able to operate the AS for about one quarter. He thinks they should have the reserves amount a little higher than their nondiscretionary items. He said the AS Board has significant reserves that would be available to the LAC if there was a problem. This would come in the form of a grant or loan. Doherty originally came at this as wanting to put a limit on the total reserves amount that could be held. He would be comfortable lowering the amount that would be placed in the reserves. He would like to hear the committees ideas of what they think a comfortable reserve amount would be. Galloway would be comfortable having an amount in the reserves that would cover the committee's nondiscretionary costs for one year. She said as of now it would be about \$13,500 with the only expense being WSA membership dues. She said if they added USSA Direct Membership and the Vote Coordinator expansion, they would be looking at a reserves amount of about \$25,000. Majkut likes the idea of having a limited amount of reserves that forces the council to come up with ways to get students involved. He thinks this amount sounds reasonable because it covers expenses for a year with

room for flexibility. Galloway said as they add or take things away from the nondiscretionary funds, the reserves should fluctuate with this. She said they would deal with the actual calculations in the budget, so they wouldn't have to set a limit in the policy document.

■ Budget Recommendations (Doc. 3)

Kohout said they will most likely have an opt-out system, which will give them a lot more money than the opt-in system. She said with the opt-in system, they estimated they would be able to send two people to Congress based on the calculations of LegCon. Edgel was thinking that in the opt-in scenario LegCon should be discretionary in both systems because this trip happens every year. Galloway said that congress should be discretionary because attendees have to fill out applications and this would be at the discretion at this year's council rather than the next year's council. She said nondiscretionary would be anything approved by the Board of Directors that would be reoccurring expenses and then everything else would be at the discretion of the council. Edgel and Kohout included LegCon in the category that is for student use and lobbying efforts. Edgel didn't want to devote any set amount towards one event because the opt-in system there is so little money for the committee to spend. He said he wanted the council to have the freedom of allocating money towards the events they wanted. Galloway said they have about \$6,000 in the LAF if they don't spend any more money. Galloway mentioned that in terms of congress, they would be spending next year's revenue to fund this trip. Kohout chose \$20,000 for the revenue in the opt-in system because it is an average that Galloway mentioned before. Galloway recommends having a more conservative estimate being around \$18,000. She also recommends using the USSA Congress numbers to estimate for Congress rather than the LegCon numbers because the costs will be different. She added that since USSA Congress is going to be held at University of California Irvine, which may make travel costs may be cheaper. Edgel moved USSA Congress out of nondiscretionary funds in the opt-out scenario. He included membership dues for USSA and WSA into nondiscretionary funds. He said for the discretionary funds, they will have a lot more money and have been brainstorming a lot of new ideas of how to spend it. He said some of their new ideas are to have another lobby day or using this money to hire staff for Viking Lobby Day so they can see what they could really do with Viking Lobby Day with this new budget. 4 dittos. He said they also included LegCon in the discretionary funds as well. Edgel and Kohout came up with a section that is called LAC Ideas. He said when it comes time to pass the budget, the body might have an idea of what they want to allocate these funds towards. Kohout added that these funds could be used by LAC for things they did not account for in the budget. Galloway recommends them being more on the conservative side using the estimate of \$40,000 rather than \$49,000 for the first year of the LAF restructure. Galloway suggests having a budget for funding conferences as well. She recommends having a section dedicated to WSA meeting expenses like food and buses. Kohout suggests leaving some extra money for next year's committee to fund things that come up that they haven't allocated for. Doherty mentioned that in the policy, it specifies that any remaining funds automatically go into the reserves until they hit the limit of how much can be in the reserves. He thinks they should discuss what would happen if the reserves hit their limit, but they still have money left over. Kohout thinks that Western Votes could take advantage of the For Student Use category next year because Western Votes might not have a budget for next year. Galloway recommends renaming LAC Ideas to more flexible language and make it more than \$1,000. She hopes the LAF restructure will be implemented in the Fall.

Nie left at 5:39

VII. Action Items

A. USSA Direct Membership (Doc. 1)

Galloway thinks this conversation should be framed as pending LAF restructure implementation. She said this will be approved pending LAF restructure implementation because if the fee restructure doesn't get passed by the Board of Trustees they will not be able to fund USSA direct membership with the current opt in system. She is pushing for this now rather than after the implementation because the people involved in this committee and on the Board of Directors are the most qualified people to make this decision. She thinks the new council and Board of Directors will not come into the fall with the knowledge they have now about USSA. Edgel motions to amend the last line of this document to include that the Board of Trustees will have to approve the proposed restructure to the LAF fund. Seconded by Doherty. 11-0-0. Galloway's goal would be to have the restructure implemented by the end of summer term or the beginning of fall term. She mentioned that they will technically have USSA membership until congress and then they would have to pay half of the USSA dues by October, which will be about \$3,000. She said USSA direct membership is going to be \$6,000 and has confirmed that they will be able to pay in 2 installments. Bickel wanted to make sure this is the annual fee forever, and it is not going to increase. She mentioned that the price for direct membership will change if the annual fees for USSA are restructured. She added that if the membership fees are restructured, it will most likely work in their favor and decrease. She said USSA is thinking to restructure the way to do membership dues in a way that would be a sliding scale. Doherty wondered what the \$6,000 FTE is. Galloway said it would be about \$.40 per student when it is normally \$.50 per student. Bickel thinks clauses 2, 3, and 4 are redundant and could be condensed into one section. He doesn't think they need to mention WSA pulling out of USSA, so future committee members won't look at this and think this is the reason they want USSA direct membership. Galloway asked if the committee would like to combine 3 and 4. 4 dittos. Galloway asked the committee if they agree with Bickel about striking clause 2. Heffelmire doesn't think 2 should be removed because even though it is obvious why the committee thinks it's important to have student representation, it might not be as clear to the average student. Bishop thinks USSA is the focus of this document, so he thinks they could strike 2 because they are focusing more a federal level rather than a state and local level. Bickel thinks 2 is redundant and doesn't fit the context of the rest of the document. Eckroth suggests combining 5 and 6. He thinks it's important to have all the Board of Directors signatures on one page. Ellison thinks it's important to keep the context for what sparked wanting USSA direct membership. She thinks it's important to make the distinction that they no longer have SSA membership, but she thinks they should do it in a way that is less specific. Doherty suggests to strike clause 7 and say "Where As not having SSA membership through WSA with USSA is a tremendous detriment and disservice to the students of WWU". Galloway likes this idea. Bickel suggests striking both 7 and 8, if the committee was wanting direct membership regardless of WSA pulling out of USSA. Kohout likes both 7 and 8. She thinks the wording "detriment and disservice to students" is powerful and should be included in this document. Galloway said if they take out 7 and 8, then it would it would read that they are doing this on their own and it doesn't matter what WSA does in regards to their memberships with USSA. She said that WSA membership dues would not increase if WSA rejoins USSA. She explained that they will pay the same amount, but get less direct benefits since they are no longer members with USSA. Heffelmire thinks this is a reaction to WSA pulling out of USSA. She said this is what sparked the direct membership debate and think 7 and 8 are completely relevant to include.

Hanson left the meeting a 5:33

Galloway recommended combining 7 and 8. Bickel said they should emphasize the positive and not the negatives. He thinks they should strike 7 and 8 because they focus on the negatives. Galloway agrees with Bickel and thinks this should be independent of WSA's SSA membership. Eckroth motions to remove Where As lines 7 and 8 from the USSA Direct

Membership Resolution. Seconded by Smith. 8-2-0. Passed. The committee will be striking 7 and 8. Edgel wanted to mention that an alternative to pass this is running it as a referendum. He said a campus wide referendum was ran to join WSA, and he doesn't think they are going to lose anything by not being a part of USSA for 9 months. He doesn't think there is a loss running it as a referendum and doesn't understand why people are so quick about making this decision. He thinks this seems moving so quickly seems more about self-interest rather than student interest. Bickel thinks that running a referendum is a good opportunity to raise student awareness about USSA, and in turn foster more student activism. Kohout said USSA could help Western create a campus of awareness. She thinks the not being a part of USSA for a year would be a disservice to students. She said without being member they won't have access to USSA and they won't be able to go to LegCon at a reasonable price. 3 dittos. Galloway believes this decision needs to be made when the committee and board as a whole is well educated in this issue. 3 dittos. She this this body is qualified to make this decision, and whatever why they decide they made the best decision for this body and Western.

MOTION LAC-14-S -07 by Doherty

Approve the Resolution Regarding Direct Membership with the United States Student Association as Amended

Second: Kohout

Vote: 8-2-0

Action: Passed.

VIII. Discussion Items

A. Legacy Document (Doc. 4)

Heffelmire thinks the Western Votes Representative should also include in their reports WSA and USSA updates as well. 1 ditto. She thinks incoming members on this body have general knowledge of what Western Votes is and what their relationship is to Western Votes, WSA, and USSA. She thinks they should do this earlier in the year rather than later. Bickel is speaking on behalf of Joseph Levy portion of the Legacy Document regarding being the Legislative Liaison. He said this position would make sure everyone on LAC would be well informed about what is going on in the local area. He said LAC will craft a local agenda that will be the majority focus for the duration of the job term. He suggests doing research on local issues in Bellingham over the summer. Aguirre said they will have a lot opportunity in the future to do more community outreach to show students what they are doing and about issues in the community. Bickel suggested to reach out to local organization because there are so many people in the community wanting to help out with their activism. He said one of the strategies would be to reach out to campus clubs and organizations about LAC policies. He said this could be achieved through petitioning and tabling in order to create an on campus presence. Aguirre said potential issues incoming LAC members would like to address would be rental safety, community safety, increased lighting and sidewalks, and student relationships with police officers and neighborhood associations. Bickel added that Samantha Goldblatt is currently the student representative of the Sehome Neighborhood Association. He suggests having LAC members be involved in neighborhood associations if they live off campus. Blake wanted to explain to the next Graduate Student on LAC to focus on issues that pertain to graduate students at a local, state, and federal level. He said the Board of Directors was wondering if the graduate student representative on LAC needs to be a member on the Graduate Council. He was on the Graduate Council and thought it was helpful to have that connection. He said even though it was helpful to be on both committees, it does limit student involvement since one person would serve on both committees. He said being on both allowed him to foster connections with the key stakeholders in the graduate schools. He thinks if they should try to get more graduate students on this board along with other committees. He also recommends the new council to try and recruit students from areas like Math, STEM, and

Business. Galloway thinks this is a great start and suggests them meeting again to add an orientation section for new committee members. She said this is the first draft and expects the committee to refine their document in the upcoming weeks. Eckroth broke his document into three groups of how they create proposals. These groups are WSA, Associated Students, and smaller bill proposals. He gave a brief overview of what is important to consider at a WSA and Associated Students level. He threw in the Bill Tracking Process and hopes there will be an intern in the REP that will communicate with the LAC, AS Legislative Liaison, and the VP for Governmental Affairs. He also threw in the issue stance protocol because that is how they take stance on issues.

IX. Other Items

X. Next Meeting Date

- May 19, 2014

X. Adjourn

The Meeting was adjourned at 5:50pm

Approved by Kaylee Galloway, AS VP for Governmental Affairs