

**Western Washington University Associated Students
Board of Directors Meeting**

Friday, January 29th, 2016

VU567

AS Board Officers: *Present:* Belina Seare (President), Abby Ramos (VP Diversity), Hannah Brock (VP BusOps), Israel Rios (VP Activities), and Emma Palumbo (VP Student Life).

Advisor(s): Eric Alexander (Advisor)

Guest(s): Stacey Ejim (AS Elections Coordinator)

MOTIONS

ASB-16-W-15 Approval of the Minutes from January 22nd with written edits. *Passed.*

ASB-16-W-16 Approval the Board Meeting Location Space Change Proposal and \$500 to be Used From Operating and Enhancement (FXXEHN) for Future Space Changes with Approval From Brock. *Passed.*

ASB-16-W-17 Approval of the ESC Steering Committee Charge and Charter with the Exception that the AS Club Business Director Will Remain a Nonvoting Member. *Passed.*

ASB-16-W-18 Approval the Student Trustee Selection Committee Charge and Charter with the Edits. *Passed.*

ASB-16-W-19 Approved the Committee Appointments. *Passed.*

Belina Seare, AS President, called the meeting to order at 9:11 a.m.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION ASB-16-W-15 by Brock

Approval of the Minutes from January 22nd with written edits.

Second: Dove Vote: 4-0-1 Action: Passed

II. INFORMATION ITEMS- Guests*

IV. INFORMATION ITEMS - Guests*

A. Election Code

Ejim said they were looking at the code and updating things. Some key highlights were adding in an opposition campaign and public finance for opposition campaign for any initiative or referendum. They also are suggesting to remove the \$25 deposit and instead taking it out of public financing if they do not remove their posters. How to collect the signatures is a challenge though. They tried to come up with language to help clarify when they can get signatures or not. They came up with the language “signatures must be collected in direct personal interactions by the candidate”. Ramos said there could still be different interpretations of that. Could they say they can’t go into classes and get signatures? Brock said they can announce that they are running but they can’t use class time to collect signature. Ejim asked what the appropriate number of people candidates can talk to and is there an appropriate number?

Would five people be a good amount? Rios said they talked about putting the explicit language around a classroom and but what about around a club? Some clubs are much larger than others and it would basically be the same thing. Seare said what is the issue having it passed around the classroom? Ramos said some students take online classes, they don't have that ability to pass it out. They have an unfair advantage. Also some people are taking small seminars and some take huge lecture class. Rios said part of their reasons to keep the signatures are that it helps the candidates get out and talk to students. Also that it's a chance for students to get to know them. It allows the students to know elections are happening. Ramos said could they say candidates can't send petition around without talking to the person? Ejim said that could be a possibility. Another question is should it be 150 signature? Should they lower the number? Brock said signatures can be a barrier. They want to encourage students to run, but not have everyone just to run. It's part of the position to interact with people. What are other campuses like? Ejim said she hasn't looked into what other campuses are doing, but maybe lowering it to 100, or letting the filing period be longer. Ramos said she thinks that it should be one or the other, lowering the signatures and keeping the filing period the same or extending the filing period and keeping it 150. Rios said 150 sounds a lot, but it doesn't feel like a lot. Alexander said did the committee talk about why they need to gather signatures? Ejim said they didn't talk about it, but it helps publicize that the elections are happening and also helps candidates talk to other students. Seare said she would be okay with not having signatures. Palumbo said it is good to get barriers down, but there is a lot to take in with that face to face interaction with other students. Ramos said if candidates don't get the 150 signatures, they aren't allowed to even run. The 150 signature just for candidates to be able to run, it is an intentional barrier. Seare said it also creates some type of accountability of some kind of dedication. Ejim said they could have two ways of being a candidate, signatures, or write something about why they are truly interested in the position. Rios said candidate still have to write up their candidate statement. He thinks that signatures help communicate with students and it helps them prep for campaigning. To be in these positions they have to get student feedback and input on things and signatures will prepare them for that. If they have a really hard time collecting signatures they will have a hard time in those positions. Brock said she thinks 100 signatures and keeping deadline the same could work. It's hard because students leave for spring break, and it breaks up candidates' momentum. Ejim said they can look into that for sure. Ramos said people who sign the forms are the ones in the power. They can shut down a student of color or have sexist or homophobic views. It's a hostile experience to put the student on. Especially with everything that happened this year. They could try it for a year and see how it goes. The election code changes every year. Last year no one ran so obviously they need to have smaller barriers. They see people interested in running but they see the signatures and get worried. Seare said they need to be conscious of those things and not afraid to talk about it. They are making sure the opportunity is there for every student. It's good to bring attention to the underrepresented aspect. Ejim said as being the AS Election Coordinator, she fears that no one will run. She is up for trying anything. They can have multiple options. It can be very intimidating to collect signatures. She recognize that they have to be good at public speaking too though. Perhaps for next meeting she can come up with another option. Seare said ability to have something more fluid would be great. Brock said she likes that idea with the options. They could do a video or write up, and that could really create those options for people. Rios said who's going to approve what the students are turning in? Who would be making those decisions? Seare said Sabrina Houck, the AS Board Program Assistant or Ejim would. Rios said he could still see a reason to keep the 150 signatures, it's students saying that they support that candidate on the ballot.

Then again, it could only have one person running for each of their spots. Seare said if there are clear guidelines it could really help. Ramos said why limit who gets to run? Why do they have to say that? They still have to get voted for by the student body, so just because the Board lets them run, doesn't mean they are going to get elected. Palumbo said quickly looking at other schools it is ranging from 25-200 signatures and a lot of them were 25-50 signatures. Seare said why are they trying to limit who gets on the ballot? They should be trying to fight against those odds? Ramos said they don't need to limit people being a candidate. Seare said they could live stream the debates this year. Ejim said a couple last changes they made were that they added a provision to help with voter net because of what happen last year. East year during the elections voter net didn't work for a day and they had to extend the elections. The changes would be that the Election Coordinator, and Election Board chair and the elections advisor can extend the online voting if needed. Brock suggested electronic signatures? Ejim said she can look into that. Ramos said for the opposition campaigns is there something they make candidates sign saying they can't use propaganda against each other to help make sure they aren't going to the extreme? Houck said that there is a conduct agreement that is signed by the candidate but they should look at the language to make sure it covers all the bases. Ejim said the last change was referendum financing. They are looking into taking it from the budget that they all are control of, so they don't have their own personal money to do that. Seare asked when it needs to be approved. Ejim said in the next couple weeks. Brock said could they discuss this in their work session to go over some of the ideas of options? Seare said yes.

III. ACTION ITEMS - Guests*

V. PERSONNEL ITEMS *(subject to immediate action)*

VI. ACTION ITEMS - Board*

A. Space Discussion

Seare said the February 5th AS Board meeting set up is underway. She wanted to thank Shalom Murphy, the Event Services Supervisor for her effort on this. She hasn't contacted the people from the Disability Resource Center for accommodation but she will be doing that today. They will be figuring out how others can read along with what the Board members are talking about. They will have TV screens showing what they are currently talking about. They need to talk about the budget. She was thinking about funding this through the Operating and Enhancement budget. Would \$400 be okay if it's around 80 per set up? Brock said they could do \$500 just to make sure. Brock said that they have it in their budget. They can just send her the cost from Event Services when they get them. Seare said at the work session on Tuesday, they talked about ideas for the agenda. It would be really good on Tuesday if they had good concert ideas on how they want to present their agenda to be engaging to students.

MOTION ASB-16-W-16 by Ramos

Approval the Board Meeting Location Space Change Proposal and \$500 to be Used From Operating and Enhancement (FXXEHN) for Future Space Changes with Approval From Brock.

Second: Palumbo Vote: 5-0-0 Action: Passed

B. Steering Change and Charter

Ramos said they brought this last week and the biggest thing would be the voting rights to the AS Club Business Director. But after last week she went back to Steering and they want to take it back now and not give the AS Club Business Director voting rights.

MOTION ASB-16- W-17 by Brock

Approval of the ESC Steering Committee Charge and Charter with the Exception that the AS Club Business Director Will Remain a Nonvoting Member.

Second: Palumbo Vote: 4-0-1 Action: Passed

C. Student Trustee Selection Committee Charge and Charter.

Seare said they saw this last week. Brock asked if they could they schedule a time and see which Board members schedule fits best in it? Seare said yes. It's not a big time commitment. Palumbo and Brock said they would be willing. Palumbo said there is a typo in the end.

MOTION ASB-16-W-18 by Ramos

Approval the Student Trustee Selection Committee Charge and Charter with the Edits.

Second: Rios Vote: 5-0-0 Action: Passed

VII. INFORMATION ITEMS - Board*

A. Reserves Restructure

Brock said they are bringing this topic back. She is bringing it back as an information item because it looks different than before. Their discretionary reserve \$374,000. That's just in discretionary, that's after all their preapproved grants and anything they have allocated previously. As she sees it, it's not at a healthy level. It should be around 10-15% of operating cost. They also have other reserve accounts too, that is just the discretionary. There is also a reserve policy coming which are three separate policies. This makes it simpler than it was before. If they approve these changes, then they will reflect that in the policies that will come to the Board. The Rainy Day Fund is if an emergency happened it would be able to pay for the operating costs for about a quarter. Anything that is leftover via their operating costs for the year, it goes back into the reserves. They want to do one-time expenses and not positions or something that would go into operating costs. It makes their bargaining in S and A Fee Committee harder when they look at the AS's reserves and see how much money they have in there. It's not fiscally responsible to just sit on student money either. Some of the options of spending down the Discretionary could be the ESC renovation, new equipment or a new installment for the challenge course. Those are just some of the examples they could spend that money on. Alexander said every year, what doesn't get spent in normal operating budget every year goes into reserves. The AS has \$2.1 million that is allotted into the AS which is 100% student fees. Services and Activities (S and A) Fees goes into different areas on campus. One area is Departmentally Related Activities Committee (DRAC) which are groups that are tired

to academic departments but are activities outside the classroom. Then there is the AS which is the co-curriculum work. There is Recreation Sports fee, which goes to club sports like the club soccer team. Then it also goes into Athletics. There are also non-negotiable items like copy writing fees for when they play music at events. Ramos asked if the building fee is out of it. Alexander no, that's a totally separate fee. There are a number of student fees, and the AS is most involved with the S and A fee. Every year their hundreds of budgets add up to that \$2.1 million and after years that they have been underspending. Over the last 20 years, the AS has underspent. At the end after they paid all their bills, they still have that money in that account. All unused money sweeps it into the reserve account. The reserves becomes sort of the AS's savings account, which is different than their checking account. It's healthy to have some reserve but not a substantial amount of money. Then they created the reserve policy which sorts out how the reserves work and can be accessed. One big part of this proposal is the Rainy Day Reserves which is for unforeseeable expenses such as the state says they are no longer funding higher education or next year they think they are going to have 15,000 students and they have 13,000? How do you pay the bills with 2,000 less students not paying into the fees? Before it was set to 20% of the operating budget and that's pretty high. They can be better stewards of student dollars. Then where do they put it? The Board historically have taken whatever is left is called "discretionary". Historically they have spent this money with grants. They are looking into how people can access it. What's a better way to arrange this so they can be better stewards of student money and people can have access to it. Brock said Cindy Monger and her wanted to call it something other than Rainy Day Fund and they were thinking it would be Operating Reserves. It's clearer about what the actual reserves are. A healthy level is not 20% it would be at 10%. So if they decided to switch it to 10% the \$491,998 in rainy day and it would go down to \$245,999. Where would that money go? Discretionary Reserves. That means they would have \$619,999 in the Discretionary Reserves. There is too much in their reserves in general. And the idea is put it into a more accessible pool. Brock said last year the Rainy Day Reserves was tapped into by KUGS when their towers went down. What will they do with the extra discretionary money? They want to safe guard some of that amount. They don't want to spend all that money but they can also look into what options are best to use that money on. Having the Financial Fund Manager have access to come of it creates some check and balance as well. And they have professional staff that haven't been to a professional development in 15 years. In order to get funding for that, there is no break down over what the Board has leadership over or what the Financial Fund Manager has control over. The Financial Fund Manager who is Alexander, oversees the FXXVU budget which is almost all personnel expenses. Alexander said every enterprise has overhead. FXXVU is the annualized expenses for salaries, copy services, paper and those sorts of things. There overhead is about 36% which is lower than any other place that they see on campus such as facilities management which is 47%. They keep the overhead really low. FXXVU spends that money and at the end of the year they may not spend that money because for example, if they have someone leave a staff position, that position is vacant for a couple months, that's money they thought was going to salaries. That money that is unspent then it goes to reserves. It would allow him to have the opportunity to spend it instead it going into the reserves. What Brock is proposing FXXVU contributes to 36% and she would like to see this mirrored of what Alexander have oversight on the reserves. It would be a safe guard for that money. They want to make sure they don't spend it down in a single year. It would still leave, \$396,799 more than the current amount. The 36% Alexander's position would oversee is \$223,199. Alexander said an example of what he could do with the money is they are struggling to do something with the web redesign. They

could hire a person for a one time project and Alexander would make that call. Another example would be a conference in Seattle for professional development. Currently they don't have a huge amount in their budget for their 27 employees. They have been really fiscally responsible. It would be better to get them all to Seattle instead of 1 person to a national conference to the same amount. Ramos said the AS reserves are student dollars, why would they be paying VU staff to go to trainings. Why wouldn't the university pay for those developments? Alexander said all their positions are paid by student fees. All the VU and AS staff salaries are paid from the S and A fee. That's normal on most campuses. They aren't getting their tuition dollars they are getting the student fees. It's a student and activities fee.. Seare said this is one of those opportunities to look at the structure. They would be giving more control to someone who is not student. They may have to go back to their drawing board, but to make sure there is more student input. Brock said do they want all \$619,000 for a Board to oversee? They don't know who will be in those positions. There is nothing preventing spending all of that money. They don't need to approve it at 36% , that was a number she came up with because it is what the VU's budget is contributing to the operating costs currently. They could be a cap instead of a percentage too. They want advisor accountability but they can't have professional development either. They don't have anything in place for that. Ramos said the remaining proportion would be the Board to decide? Brock said yes, \$396,799. Alexander said check and balance is good, financial fund manager can always say no. That safe guard is there, in essence, it's not a smoke and mirrors thing. This will clearly show how much can be spent by who and how much money is there. Brock said currently the Financial Fund Manager could also spend that money, but it wouldn't be transparent. Alexander said he would never do that, because they have those policies. Brock said this would clearly defining it for everyone. Brock said this would have the Board to have more a separate account and what they can spend. Seare said would this come back next week? Brock said yes, but she wanted to see how they all felt. Alexander said a question they will get is how did the reserves get so big? That's a question that's always going to be asked. One year positions didn't do it. It's over time. It's putting money from untouchable to touchable. Rios said how did the reserve get so high? Are they putting too much in people's budgets? Brock said they always think they need more, and things happen such as turn overs. Fast year ROP wanted more money, and then a lot of turn overs happened so the money didn't get spent. Students also think they are being fiscally responsible by not spending it all. Everyone thinks it's good to leave a cushion in their budget. Alexander said every year a tiny bit gets put in. Even if every budget is spent down, in the S and A fee, they set fee per student, they make a guess of how many students will be full time students. And usually they were really conservative. Say they knew it was 13,500 students but they still base it at 13,000 students coming. Then there was 500 students who paid for that fee, that weren't accounted for. The money doesn't get distributed by their budget. They distribute it by percentage to each area. If they have more students, they get more money than they asked for. Rios said he is hesitant dropping the reserves because there is a chance there won't be so much students there next year. He was thinking 15% of the Rainy Day Reserve. Brock said Raquel had said 10% but Brock thought 15% might be good too. Alexander said there is no state standard, they just look at what other businesses are doing. Rios said if they have a one year issue, it would be hard to cut services they provide. The reserves could help unless it becomes a trend. Brock said they can do some research on what other organizations are doing. It makes it more transparent of what numbers they have. Rios said with the Discretionary reserve, are they going to actively try and figure out how to spend that? How much do they want to spend this year? Brock said that depends on how much they want the Financial Fund

Manager to have. Seare said conference fund could be one way. She wants there to be a way to get student input. Palumbo said do they need to have an idea on what to spend it on when they approve it? Brock said no. It's student fee dollars so student input would be huge on this. Alexander said they could do a call for proposals.

VIII. CONSENT ITEMS *(subject to immediate action)*

A. Committee Appointments

Campus Dining Committee

Devin Campbell	Finance	Junior
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Student Conduct Appeals Board

Sarah Berglin	International Business	Sophomore
Devin Campbell	Finance	Junior
Nathaniel Williams	History/Political Science	Sophomore
Ellie James	Biochemistry	Sophomore

Election Board

Maggie Stuefloten	Political Science	Senior
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Sustainable Action Fund Committee

Samuel Potts	Urban Planning and Sustainable Development	Senior
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Gender Neutral Facilities Guidelines Committee

Emerson Lee	Sociology	Junior
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Student Academic Grievance Board

Ellie James	Biochemistry	Sophomore
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MOTION: ASB-16-W-19 by Palumbo
 Approved the Committee Appointments.
 Second: Rios Vote: 5-0-0 Action: Passed

IX. BOARD REPORTS

Belina Seare, AS President did not give a report.

Abby Ramos, VP for Diversity reported that February 23rd there will be an ESC forum in VU 565. Hopefully have Bruce Shepard and Eileen Coughlin there and other Vice Presidents of the university. She has been lacking meeting with the ROP and she will make more of an effort to do that. She has set up a one on one to create a SPAC report in her own way. That will help her figure out how to give them more support and then see what could be done this year and for her legacy document.

Zach Dove, VP for Academic Affairs did not give a report.

Patrick Eckroth, VP for Governmental Affairs did not give a report.

Hannah Brock, VP for Business and Operations reported that said the Womxn's Center WC is no longer going through SPAC because of the ROP restructure discussion. The Veterans outreach Center (VOC) is still going through SPAC though.

Israel Rios VP for Activities reported that DRAC had a new club join, the Western Window. They didn't belong to any real part of campus. They wanted it to be part of DRAC but DRAC won't fund it. They passed it, they were almost forced into passing it and it's going to be a bigger issue when it comes to the budget. A club member said that the vehicle fee is restrictive to them. As gas prices to go down it's hard to justify using the AS vehicles over their own. They asked the Board to think about the fee.

Emma Palumbo VP for Student Life did not give a report.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

Belina Seare, AS President, adjourned the meeting at 11:38 a.m.