

**Western Washington University Associated Students  
Legislative Affairs Council  
Thursday, February 25, 2016 VU 567**

**Present:** Patrick Eckroth (ASVP for Governmental Affairs), Josie Ellison (Legislative Liaison), McKenzie Dent (Local Liaison), Haley Newhouse (Western Votes!), Bridget Doyle Williams (Student at Large), Henry Pollet (Student at Large), Briana Dearing (Student at Large), Andrea Tomkins (Student at Large), Losa Berhane (Student at Large), and Emma Bigongiari (Student at Large).

**Absent:** Nora Selander (Vice Chair), Sarah Berglin (Student at Large)

**Advisor:** Lisa Rosenberg

**Secretary:** Bryce Hammer

**Guest:**

**MOTIONS**

**LAC-16-W-26** Approved the minutes from 2-18-2016. Passed.

**LAC-16-W-27** Motion to approve the Tenant Waste Proposal for the ASWWU Local Agenda. Passed.

**LAC-16-W-28** Motion to adjourn. Passed.

**Patrick Eckroth, Chair of Legislative Affairs Council, called the meeting to order at 4:07pm.**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. REVISIONS TO THE AGENDA**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*A. MOTION LAC-16-W-26 by Newhouse*

Approved the minutes from 2-18-2016

Second: Dearing Vote: 8-0-0 Action: Passed

**IV. REPORTS**

**A.** Legislative Liaison: Ellison said everything Western supports is dead except for a few things. Civic Education is dead because it didn't get a lot of motion this year. Support for Survivors got some legs but was too rushed to be good enough, it will be worked on in the interim. Dedicated Revenue was a nonstarter, like most changes in taxes during policy years. Progressive tax structures aren't going anywhere. Voting Rights Act has been edited but covers a lot of the same bases. It looks like it'll make it through the Senate. Extending the voter registration deadline will probably have hearings but won't make it out. Automatic voter

registration did not have the Senate hearing so it's effectively dead. Preregistration is held back so now auditors have to do voter registration in high schools one day a year. That's the bill that made it out of committee and will probably pass the floor. It's a good step but not quite what we were hoping for. Budgets came out this week. The House Budget does not provide the backfill, doesn't do much for students but does fund the program that would allow students that quit school over three years ago and only have a quarter left to return to school. The House Budget would also fund the State Need Grant to the level they expected last year. The Senate Budget predicted how much backfill we'd need for the expected level of enrollment. Now that they have the real numbers Western is getting about 800K. The State Need Grant took a small cut but that was probably an accident. What is exciting is that the Senate, unlike House, dedicated some funding for student success. This is good because it'll keep the discussion on the table. The funding will be taken from the cyber security program. It involves some graduation requirements in certain programs. They're trying to talk to people on Ways & Means and they're talking to Western Votes! to organize an action to make sure it stays on the budget. Student success is the most likely item on the agenda to make it through. Dent asked the bill number for high school auditor. Ellison said they'd get back with an exact number. The bill would move registration from the Vote category to the Civic Engagement category but doesn't really hit either. They asked for questions. There were none. Eckroth thanked them for the information. Ellison said they'll send out a full update soon.

- B. Western Votes! :** Western Votes is planning a town hall meeting that will be similar to the debate. They're planning on coordinating with Stacy to see how they'll differ. There are also two events to view the Democratic and Republican primary debates. There will be a general assembly next week to replace Josie Ellison.
- C. Local Liaison:** Dent said she has a lot of meetings set up. One with the mayor, city council members, local neighborhood leaders. She's speaking tonight at the League of Women Voters. Tompkins asked if the apartments next to Fred Meyer were affiliated with Western. Patrick said they're not funded by Western or affiliated with them but they're targeted towards students. Bigongiari said they're very expensive. Eckroth said that many units hitting the market should decrease the rent in the next few years. Dent asked if they were forbidding non students from living there. Tompkins said yes, her friend called to inquire about applying but they told her it was restricted to students. Eckroth said they're not allowed to do that. He said he'd check in with the VP for Student Life and the housing department.
- D. VP for Governmental Affairs:** Eckroth said he's been focusing on the NSPS. He's booked flights and hotel rooms. Flights went over the expected price but they're receiving additional funding from the Board of Director's discretionary funds.

They're trying to see 16 students in the delegation. Other than that the AS Election candidate filing period opens up on Tuesday the 1<sup>st</sup> of March. There was a WSA meeting last week. There won't be an in person meeting in March but they're having a Google hangout. The general assembly will be in Spring quarter and the proposals for that agenda will be due before the meeting. They'll also be electing WSA officers and talking about changing the structure. They're thinking of separating the two functions of the WSA which are legislative affairs and campus issues. Western is not in favor of this. Campus issues wouldn't get funding, man power, or attention. Western, Central, Bellevue, and grad students are united in that. Eckroth said he's not in favor because it makes no sense. Dearing asked who's proposing it. Eckroth said WSU, they were upset about the length of January's meeting. Dent asked where they're proposing it go. Eckroth said it would be split into two branches. It's the campuses that already don't do organizing. Newhouse asked if they want a shorter agenda or drive. Eckroth said agenda but they aren't that long. Berhane asked when they're planning to implement the branches. Eckroth said the discussion just started and if it were to happen it would be at the general assembly. He said he'd keep folks updated through March and April. The lobbying efforts won't function well if they don't talk about campus issues. Berhane asked how likely it is to pass. Eckroth said WSA had budgetary difficulties because UW wasn't paying their dues so they restructured how they do dues which also changed the cap on votes. Every school gets 2 votes + an extra vote for every 5K students. WSA and UW now have fewer votes. Each school only gets a max of 3 additional votes so it limits the power of UW and WSU. The regional campuses will have more power but they're still in the middle. He'll be reaching out to get the process started for General Assembly. Western sends 14 people and has 9 votes. Limited conversations but they're trying to create a students of color coalition like in Oregon. More updates will come.

## **V. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **A. USSA NSPS Selection Process**

Eckroth asked if the council had questions about the selection process or ideas to make it better. As a reminder, the USSA Congress is happening in August so it's coming up soon. Pollet said he thought it went pretty well, it was efficient and they were able to work through a large number of applications relatively quickly. Eckroth asked if there was enough conversation. Dent said as they're getting more applicants having a scoring guidelines to guide the rankings, particularly in the middle because it matters so much, would be helpful. Eckroth said they would outline the criteria. Dent said ranking 1-5 on each criterion would be good. Eckroth said they could revisit the policy if people wanted. Dent said it's hard because some areas should be given more weight than others. Eckroth said they used to be ordered but they might want to look into reordering the criteria because the old ranking system doesn't apply anymore. He pulled up the old criteria rankings. Dent said they're no longer talking about funding through other

sources. Dearing said there was no section in the application for that. Eckroth said it's happened in the past and will likely happen again. Last year there was funding from Personnel Committee, Steering, and LAC. After things had been ranked it was on the VP to coordinate with other sources. Dent asked if they knew alternative sources of funding before the decision or if it was even taken into consideration during the decision making process. Eckroth said it wasn't taken into consideration. Dent said if that's the case they should remove it from the list of criteria. Eckroth said they'll still be looking at the alternative sources of funding it just doesn't usually factor in until after the decision is made. Dent suggested rewording. Dearing said they should know if they have opportunity for separate funding. Eckroth said internal sources of alternative funding wouldn't have to answer it because they know it already. He said they'll revisit it for USSA National Student Congress process. Berhane said she should edit the application so it more closely aligns with the criteria. Some of the students had organizing experience but they didn't list it in the proper area because they didn't know what the council wanted from them. Dent asked for more elaboration space. Dearing said they could give examples. Dent said have them describe their involvement within the examples. Eckroth said it was included on OrgSync application and he sent it out to the committee. Dearing said change the criteria a little bit based on how they made the decision. Eckroth said the application questions have similarities to the criteria. He said priority would go to the criterion that listed diversity and inclusion, and they'd make it more specific. Newhouse said the application should include an area for applicants to list their pronouns. Eckroth said date of birth would also be helpful for scheduling flights. Edits will be brought to the next meeting. He asked if the council wanted to know who's going. The said yes so Eckroth read off the list. There was remarkable similarity within people's top rankings and most were similar around the middle. Despite his reservations about the new averaging system there was not much chance for tying.

## **VI. INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **A. Local Agenda**

#### **i. Eliminating the Poll Tax**

Dent asked for questions. Dearing said they should take out a sentence and change the title because it's not accurate. Eckroth said it's codified in law; legislation actually refers to it as the poll tax. Dearing said they're illegal. Dent said they still refer to it as a poll tax. Henry said the opponents call it a poll tax. Eckroth said they had the same debate about it for the state agenda. Eckroth asked which counties in Washington have prepaid postage. Henry said King county will do it but they don't advertise it because it's expensive. Dent said they're meeting with the auditor about this and the voter registration landlord thing. League of Women voters is also excited about it.

#### **ii. Affordable Housing**

Bigongiari asked what other proposals there are for the Samish area. Dent said commercial units. Newhouse asked where it would be exactly. Eckroth said they have the right to condemn any building on the street and put in mixed income development. He asked for questions. There were none,

iii. Increased Lighting

Dent said this one would involve meeting with the council members, the mayor and public works. Eckroth said each council member has a dedicated area outside of the council and asked if dent knew the one for Public Works. Dent said Bomemann is the one for Public Works. She also said meeting with the neighborhood leaders will be good because they're vocal at the city level. Rosenberg asked about the wording in the proposal. Hammer said she could reword. Eckroth said they could add specific neighborhood areas to the proposal. Dent said half the respondents in the survey said lighting was an issue. Newhouse said another concern is being hit by a car so adding that would be good. Berhane said there is a bus stop that isn't next to a cross walk and isn't lit so cars can't see. It's on 21<sup>st</sup> street. Eckroth said there are multiple areas around town where the sidewalk stops on one side of the street and there isn't a crosswalk to the other side. Dearing said lighting on paths where there are bushes and trees because it's hard to see where you're growing. Eckroth said there was another one like that around Bill McDonald, Laurel, Mathes, and a few others.

## VII. ACTION ITEMS

### A. Local Agenda Proposals

#### i. Tenant Waste Proposal

Dent said they looked at it two weeks ago. Newhouse asked if they read it. Dent said yes. Eckroth said it's coming out the Tenant Waste Task Force. Dent said this proposal would be supported by community members. Eckroth asked if there was any further discussion. There was none.

*MOTION LAC- 16-W-27 by Dearing*

Motion to approve the Tenant Waste Proposal for the ASWWU Local Agenda.

Second: Pollet Vote: 8-0-0

Action: Motion passed.

## VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Eckroth said they'll start creating their federal agenda soon. WSA General Assembly is May 14<sup>th</sup> and proposals are due a month beforehand so those will come up soon. Voter access is coming together. Dent said the local proposals will have high school civics and parking next week.

*MOTIONLAC-16-W-28 by Newhouse*

Motion to adjourn.

Second: Dearing

Vote:8-0-0

Action: Passed

***The meeting was adjourned at 5:13pm.***