

Western Washington University Associated Students
AS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

August 17, 2017 Room VU 460

AS Board Officers: *Present:* Simrun Chhabra(President), Hunter Eider (VP Academics), Julia Rutledge (VP Activities), Alex LaVallee (VP BusOps), Erick Yanzon (VP Diversity), Ana Ramirez (VP Governmental Affairs), and Annie Gordon (VP Student Life)

Advisor(s): Eric Alexander (Advisor)

Guest(s): Hugo Sanchez, Bill Lyne, Larry Estrada, Jovana Oreckio

MOTIONS

ASB-17-SU-1 Approve to move the Undocumented Students Support Working Group from information item to action item. **Passed.**

ASB-17-SU-2 Approve the Undocumented Students Supports Working Group. **Passed.**

ASB-17-SU-3 Approve to move the resolution regarding white supremacy and the role of higher education from information item to action item. **Passed.**

ASB-17-SU-4 Approve the resolution regarding white supremacy and the role of higher education. **Passed.**

ASB-17-SU-5 Appoint Ana Ramirez as an unpaid AS Consultant for Governmental Affairs and to create a subcommittee headed by the AS President to determine the details of the position. **Passed.**

Simrun Chhabra, AS President, called the meeting to order at 2:09p.m.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

II. REVISIONS TO THE AGENDA

III. PUBLIC FORUM (*comments from students and the community*)

IV. INFORMATION ITEMS - Guests*

A. College for All Bill Support Request

Oreckio said that she is a fourth year at Western. This year she is interning in the Seattle office of congresswoman Jayapal, as well as on the campaign. One of the things that drew me to Congresswoman Jayapal was her stance on College Affordability, she hit the ground running when she got elected and introduce legislation to materially improve the lives of students all across the country. I am here today to ask for endorsement for her College for All bill (HR1880) introduced in the House. Sanders introduced it in the Senate. I'll be here for questions and clarification. HR1880 (The College for All Act) addresses the college debt crisis. Student debt and interests rates have skyrocketed since the 2008 crash. This bill aims to eliminate tuition for working families at public college and universities and is paid for entirely by a new tax on Wall Street speculation. The act also aims to halve the existing student loan interest rates and decrease future rates. The bill helps everyone, as well as student loan borrowers and students and their families. For prospective students and families it creates free tuition at public four year colleges, federal government would pay for 2/3 and states would pay for 1 /3. Paid for by taxing Wall Street

hedge funds and investing houses. Tax is projected to create more money than the plan would use. Thirty-three cosponsors in Congress after only three months. We are asking for your indorsement because it is a national policy and it could really improve the lives of almost everyone in this country by investing in education infrastructure. This starts a conversation about education in our country. We would love to hear questions or comments on the presentation. Yanzon asked how this affects out of state students and undocumented students. Oreckio replied that as far as she knows it applies to everyone. The goal is to make education broadly acceptable. Sanchez said that that should definitely be included, especially if residency status is required. Chabra asked how applications would happen. Would it be like FAFSA? Tyne clarified that the faculty union has already endorsed the Act. Estrada asked how the Wall Street tax would work. Is it a tax on trades? How do they aggregate the taxation? Oreckio said that they would tax 0.5 percent on stock trades. 0.1 percent fee on bonds and .005 percent fee on derivatives. This could raise discussion about how we want value to be distributed in our economy. Estrada said that for a bill like this to pas they would need crossover votes. Is there anyone Jayapal thinks will? Oreckio replied that outreach efforts are underway in D.C. Alexander brought up that sometimes bills change and are amended and asked how an endorsement would work in light of that. Tyne said that the faculty union is very in touch with the NE A, and that they would know about amendments. Alexander said that the only thing would be how to endorse the bill so that the board doesn't have to continually track it and look for amendments. Tyne said he would be happy to keep the Board updated. Alexander said he thinks that would be really helpful, especially because as the bill moves from college to college it might change slightly. Oreckio said that that was a great point and that making that process public would be a great idea. Tyne said that he thinks Sander and Jayapal are both in positions of enough power that they won't let the bills go forward in a form that they don't like. Tavailee asked about the Wall Street speculation task and said that it wasn't mentioned in the bill. Would the Board be voting to endorse the tax as well as the bill? Oreckio said they would be voting to approve both, it's a fully costed bill, the revenue the bill requires is in the bill itself. If they have input about the revenue generating mechanisms in the bill that's something we would love to hear about. But they are asking for the Board's to endorse the whole bill as it currently stands. Tavailee said that he didn't see the plan for the tax in the text of the bill. Oreckio explained that the way bills are introduced is that the language of the bill is introduced then later the costing measures are introduced later. TaVallee said that it would be nice to get the text of the costing measure.

Yanzon moves the College for All Act from info to action item.

Alexander asked how soon Oreckio needed support. Is there urgency? Or can it be in a month? Oreckio said that the middle of Fall quarter is the latest, if they wanted to talk about it next meeting that would be fine.

Yanzon retracts his motion.

Y. ACTION ITEMS - Guests*

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

VII. ACTION ITEMS - Board*

A. Undocumented Students Supporting Working Group

Yanzon details his plan to create a work group to continue figuring out how to pay undocumented students for the work they are hired or elected to do. This goes beyond just the

AS. Membership is subject to change. Alexander recommended that there is a clarification in the membership policy. Perhaps adding the word minimally. Yanzon said that, again this will be an advisory group. Membership won't really matter. They wouldn't have voting power. Chhabra wondered how often the group would meet. Yanzon replied that it would probably be biweekly. This will be up to the VP for Diversity in the future. Gordon asked if the students at large would be selected the same way as other committees. I'm also wondering what your hopes are for memberships? Do you want students with experience with this? Yanzon said that that would be ideal, not only students but also faculty who know what they are doing. But again the meeting will be open to the public. The membership is so that people will be there consistently. And having the same people be there consistently makes there be more accountability. Additionally this group will not only find ways to pay undocumented students but also to provide more resources for them. Again this is all in light of the resolution we passed last year to protect undocumented students. Part of that resolution was to create a scholarship in the AS for undocumented students, working with the foundation hopefully they'll have that by spring. TaVallee said, he feels like he's heard from our student constituents that this is something we should pass before our next meeting. So could we move this to an action item? Yanzon asked if there were any more changes or questions.

MOTION ASB-17-SU-1 by LaVattee

Move the Undocumented Students Support Working Group from info to action item.

Second: Gordon Vote: 5 - 0 - 0 Action: Pass

MOTION ASB-17-SU-2 by Yanzon

Approve the Undocumented Students Supports Working Group

Second: Gordon Vote: 5 - 0 - 0 Action: Pass

B. Resolution Regarding Charlottesville

Yanzon explains the resolution regarding Charlottesville and states that he would also like to bring this one to an action item considering timeline concerns. The resolution is about the existence of white supremacy and connects back to Westerns role as an institute of higher education. The resolution supports marginalized groups in Charlottesville and urges the faculty senate to make Diversity classes a requirement at Western. Gordon asked if there was ever an email sent out to all of the students when a resolution is past. Alexander said the best way is through the press, usually the Communications Office and Western Front. Chhabra said she didn't see anything wrong with the resolution. Yanzon moved to move the resolution regarding white supremacy and the role of higher education from info to action item. Eider seconded.

MOTION ASB-17-SU-3 by Yanzon

Move the resolution regarding white supremacy and the role of higher education from info to action item.

Second: Eider Vote: 5 - 0 - 0 Action: Pass

MOTION ASB-17-SU-4 by Yanzon

Approve the resolution regarding white supremacy and the role of higher education.

Second: Eider Vote: 5 - 0 - 0 Action: Pass

VIII. INFORMATION ITEMS - Board*

IX. CONSENT ITEMS *(subject to immediate action)***X. BOARD REPORTS**

Simrun Chhabra, President, reported that she wanted to find time to talk about tabling materials, everyone else has really cool ones and we have papers and it's really lame. We have tomorrow, then we have the next three weeks off. Alexander and Houck talked about what the goals presentation usually looked like. It was decided that each individual would draft goals then send them to Chhabra. LaVallee offered to head a subcommittee to get better tabling materials.

Alex LaVallee, VP for Business and Operations, reported that he was meeting with the personnel director, communications director, assessment coordinator and the business director and checking in with them about their goals for this year. I am trying to have a management council meeting next Thursday but a lot of folks are taking their vacations right now. I'll be giving a presentation, hopefully with Chhabra about the structural review.

Hunter Eider, VP for Academic Affairs, reported that he was excited for the Academic Affairs Council to start.

Julia Rutledge, VP for Activities, did not give a report.

Erick Yanzon, VP for Diversity, reported that they were in the final stage of the hiring process for the coordinator for equity and identity resource centers, I don't think I can say who it is yet. ESC reps are meeting on the thirtieth to go over some stuff about the new center. The ESC retreat will be on September 30th for the club leaders. ESC conference is on October 13th-15th. This will be the 27 annual conference. And I'm throwing an acceptance breakfast. Fall staff development, the Board is supposed to have an update on our goals, we're on the first day.

Ana Ramirez, VP for Governmental Affairs, did not give a report.

Annie Gordon, VP for Student Life, reported that she has a card going to give to give to Student Services. She is figuring out how the card wants to be formatted, let me know your thoughts. The board discussed how to format the card.

XIII. OTHER BUSINESS**A. Board Functions Conversation**

The Board discussed the card to Student Services. Yanzon mentioned that he wanted to talk to them about how they run summer start this year and give them feedback, separate from the card. Houck said that usually the President gets to sit down with some of the planners of summer start and figure out what went well and what didn't. Additionally maybe having AS input on how summer start is going to go. Alexander said that historically when that planning happens in the fall or winter AS Board members can be a part of that process. LaVallee said that if the board had any input about the AS presentation at summer start they could email him. He said one of his goals about internal AS things is to have way more transparency about how to have an active role in the AS. Alexander brought up that Lisa Rosenberg was going to finish her last day this Friday, but is extending that to sometimes next week. Lis will be officially retiring November third, we are in the process of restructuring that department. While they restructure that department we will be looking for her replacement. Yanzon said that when Kevin retired the board did a resolution for him. He thought they could do one for her, he was going to do it at this meeting but he didn't have enough

information, she is also not leaving as soon as he thought. Chhabra said she can help with that.

B. Undocumented Student and YP for Governmental Affairs Support Conversation

Yanzon asked for updates from Melinda and the Attorney General's Office about what information they were going to send the Board. Chhabra said she will try and get in touch with her. Lyne clarifies that this was the insight they were going to get from the Attorney General about Ramirez's position. Chhabra said yes, and we didn't get anything. Lyne asked if they were starting to feel jerked around at all. Gordon said that she didn't think anyone was beginning to feel jerked around, they already did. Lyne said that the impression he got last week was that the Board was prepared to pass some sort of resolution about Ramirez, the VP and the AG office intervened in the eleventh hour to say not so fast. They have had quite a while to work on this, why don't you just do what you're going to do. What's the magic that they are promising? LaVallee says that the answer to that question is we don't know. Gordon says that wrestling with this line of waiting but also recognizing that there is a point where they can't wait anymore. Alexander told Lyne that the board has already taken action, they wrote a letter stating their support of Ana. The question is what do they do now. They got feedback on the elections process last week. He is assuming that's what they are waiting to hear about. Lyne said he thought the board was going to do something last week but the authorities said they shouldn't and promised the Board some kind of solution. The Board are the elected leaders of the AS and continuing to wait for bureaucrats who don't deliver makes it seem like the Board is getting jerked around. Yanzon said what they got out of the last meeting was that they were going to continue to support Ramirez. While they don't necessarily have the power, process wise, to do any of that, but they will continue to support her. That's the first statement the Board made. That is what the working group is for him, it's a way to reaffirm that, it's the "now what" part. It's the way that they say that the AS wants undocumented students get paid for the worked they are hired or elected to do. He doesn't think saying it again actually changes anything. Lyne said that he wanted to clarify that he is not trying to superimpose his ideas upon the Board. He thinks that the Board have very good goals of trying to protect the rights of undocumented students going forward, but they also have someone sitting right here, Ana Ramirez, who is in a state of limbo. That needs something more substantive, she's waiting to hear from DACA but she is also working, she is a colleague, and she deserve a more immediate response than the advisory board. The board could take a long time. It seemed to him like the Board had a proposition for an unpaid consultancy but that got put on hold by the AG. He thinks the Board should still support your colleague regardless. LaVallee said, speaking for himself, he doesn't think they had the kind of proposition they are talking about prepared. They were asked if there needed to be an interim VP for Gov, no decision was made at that meeting. Lyne said that it seemed to me that there was emphasis in getting people together in closed session to discuss it, and as he understand it that closed session was pulled back at the advice of Casey and Lisa. LaVallee said that they found out new information and they decided to wait for that information and they have yet to find out that information. Eider said that they got this information last minute and they didn't end up with any solid plan. They couldn't come to a consensus, he thinks they were are all confused about what exactly they could do. Lyne said that it would be okay to go into closed session to discuss it because it is a personnel issue. Chhabra said that that was the aim, but they got information so last minute, they did not want to make an uninformed decision. But if there was some kind of great solution why was it proposed to us so last minute, right at the end of summer? The thought behind it was that they would get the information earlier this week. Yanzon said his question the guests are, what would they like to see the Board do? They cannot just pay her. Lyne said, just for grins, is that actually true? Who controls the AS money, is it the university or them? Alexander said that ultimately the money is institutional money, there's a difference between who can hire someone and who can pay someone. Lyne said that these were university employee's through the universities HR. Alexander said that was correct. Lyne asked if Chhabra said, lets pay Ramirez and sees what happens, she couldn't do that? Alexander said correct. Lyne said what becomes clear is the Board doesn't control its own money, that may be something

to think about. Secondly these are AS fees, not tuition money or state money. Alexander said that they are state money. Lyne said that they aren't appropriated by the legislature. Alexander says they are part of a piece of legislation on the state level that lets us collect that money. Lyne said that the Board went in to the last meeting with the intention of making a decision, and that was preempted by someone who didn't want that to happen, under the promise of new information. That seems to have been an empty promise, it's not like this is the first time this has been talked about, the Attorney General has ample time to come up with a solution. To some extent they can keep doing what they are doing, but in terms of their own processes to have this kind of parental information saying "you can't talk about this till we give you information" it doesn't seem like the Board is are being treated like adults, that's not a good place to be. Gordon said that she feels like many of us share their concern, it feels like they've spent all summer working on this, and the AG keeps popping up to say no in a very intimidating way. She would just like to give credit to everyone in this room for the amount of work they have done, they are all extremely frustrated and she just don't know what to do. They are being told not to do anything by the AG and told by people they look up to that they need to be doing more. She doesn't know what to do, but she hear them both and she is so glad they are here. Lyne said he heard what Gordon was saying and that he was there as support. And unfortunately he doesn't have an answer, but thinks what isn't okay is to have the administration tell the Board that they can't go in to executive session to discuss this because the Board has the administrative authority to do that. He know what the law permits and they can go in to closed session. Yanzon said that when they had the meeting last week it was implying that the information given to them was going to be something positive. From the meetings they've had with Melynda they keep saying no to our ideas. This meeting made it look like a yes, but no it's still a no. Sanchez asked what Lyne wanted from this Board and said that he was there for Ramirez, he asked what they needed. Just let me know what you need, whether that's sitting down with you and doing research or whatever. They need creative solutions, if they stay in the rules nothing is going to happen, Ana deserves this position and deserves to be paid. Chhabra asked Ramirez, that on that note what do you want from this Board? What do you want to see form the Board, how can they support you? LaVallee said that they aren't asking for an answer right now, we all want to support you. We aren't experts in this field we need guidance from you on how to help. He also doesn't think they were incentivized to not have that discussion in closed session, they just decided during that closed session that they would wait for new information. He didn't feel intimidated. Lastly he just want to thank everyone who dedicates there time for them to figure this out, and to offer an apology for not being super prepared. He feels like they were trying to build the plane at the same time we were taking off. He would be eager to have another meeting sooner than a month from now. Alexander said that after last week when Hannah, the former elections coordinator was presenting how she interpreted the elections code. There was a sense of urgency to figure out a response. There was a meeting in search of an agenda. It feels like they are trapped by a couple legal barriers. Lyne asked the legal barriers besides not being able to pay someone who isn't allowed to be paid. Alexander said that that is the one. Lyne asked what the barrier to declaring Ana as an unpaid assistant to the board. There are ways we can backload the pay. It seems straightforward, they keep the position open until she is eligible to be paid and until then she is an unpaid assistant to the board. When she can be paid we will figure out how to back pay her. Problem solved, this is so within the rules. Are there any legal barriers to that? Alexander said he only knows about the back pay part. For any employee that has breaks in their contract there are terms so that they can start being paid for that way forward. Alexander said that this is the point where they decide what that interim role is. These have been the open public meetings and he doesn't know if there is an ability for there to be another role. Lyne said that when he spoke to the guy in the Attorney General's office the conclusion reached was that it was up to the students. He said they should do what they want to do. This guy's name is Mike Webb. LaVallee said that the board was told by their legal council, who is the AG for the university, was that the interpretation was that even volunteering wasn't allowed if the person working wasn't usually able to work in the US even if it is not paid. Lyne said think about that for a second, if we were talking about assigning a student to do unpaid

work for some committee in the AS there wouldn't be a problem. The AG wouldn't blink an eye, they would ask why you were calling them for this. They appoint people to do unpaid work all the time right? Why is this different? Alexander said that that was correct. Chhabra said that the Attorney General said it was different because this was originally a paid position and the Board is trying to get around the law. Tyne said that no, she isn't appointing her to be the AS VP for Governmental Affairs. It might be worth it to ask the Attorney General to show them the statute that says you can't. TaVallee asked if there would be a guarantee of a potential back pay. Alexander recommended they discuss it in an executive session in the future.

The board enters an executive session at 3:42pm to discuss a personnel matter regarding the VP

MOTION ASB-17-SU-5 by Chhabra

Appoint Ana Ramirez as an unpaid AS Consultant for Governmental Affairs and to create A subcommittee headed by the AS President to determine the details of the position.

Second: Eider Vote: 5 - 0 - 0 Action: Pass
for Governmental Affairs for forty-five minutes.

The board reconvenes at 4:26pm.

Chhabra says that they are going to vote on appointing Ana Ramirez as an AS consultant for Governmental Affairs in an unpaid position and to create a subcommittee named by the AS President to determine the details of this position.

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 4:27p.m.