



Western Washington University Associated Students  
**Sustainable Action Fund Committee**

Wednesday, February 14th, 2018 5:00 PM VU567

**Members:**

**Present:** *Annie Gordon (ASVP for Student Life), Jasmine Goodnow (Faculty Representative), Alex LaVallee (ASVP for Business and Operations), Kate Rayner Fried (AS Sustainable Action Fund Education Coordinator), Johnathan Riopelle (AS Sustainable Action Fund Grant Program Coordinator), Katie Winkelman (AS ESP Director), Spiro Pappas (Sustainable Action Fund Projects Coordinator), Eric Alexander (Associate Dean of Student Engagement & Director of VU Facilities), Scott Dorough (Campus Energy Manager), Jordan Lucia (Student at Large), and Pauline Mogilevsky (Student at Large).*

**Absent:** *Crow Chloupek (Student at Large)*

**Advisor:** *Greg McBride*

**Secretary:** *Chloe Callahan*

**Guests:**

**Motions:**

**SAF-18-W-14** Approval of the 2017-2018 Mandatory Student Fees Sustainability, Equity & Justice Fund Referendum Proposal with the stipulation of the change in the title of the fee and a change in finances to be \$.90 per academic credit per quarter capped at \$9.00, with the ability to increase to \$1.20 and \$12.00. **Passed.**

**Annie Gordon called the meeting to order at 5:07 PM.**

**I. Action Items**

**a. Fee Language**

To provide context for the fee language Riopelle went over the current budget for the Sustainable Action Fund. He explained that the SAF moved almost daily because students enroll and withdrawal from the university. He said the committee began with about \$910,000 that academic year. The SAF operations budget totaled to about \$162,000 annually. He explained that he kept track of active projects and money that was already committed to other grants, about \$198,000. He explained that there was about \$211,000 left if the committee approved all the conceptual applications in process at the time. He said the SAF fee had been increase in 2015 and at the time there was no one in the SAF Program Coordinator position which lead to a large reserve. Gordon asked if anyone had any questions about the budget. LaVallee clarified that the SAF available budget was encompassing the full academic. Riopelle said the budget estimated about \$290,000 a year from the fee, fall through spring quarter, about \$130,000-\$140,000 for potential grants each year, after operation costs. He said at the

time the committee would not be able to approve all projects that had come through the SAF so far that year. He said one of the goals of the SAF that year was to make the fund more accessible to students to reset the budget. He shared that the previous year the committee had 19 meetings and only had quorum 9 times, so it was harder for them to approve grants. Rayner Fried pointed out that the budget did not include a couple of the approved conceptual applications so if approved the committee would have even less funds.

Gordon introduced a draft of the SAF fee referendum. She proposed a name change of the fee to Equity, Justice and Sustainability Fund to embody equitable sustainability to include social justice and to get away from solely environmental sustainability. The proposed fee change was \$.80 per academic credit per quarter, not to exceed \$8.00. She said this suggestion was because the committee will run out of reserves at the end of the year and this raise would allow the committee to continue at the same level, but not grow as she had previously thought. The language regarding the committee's ability to raise the fee during the renewal time period was copied from the previous fee renewal referendum proposal. She said the fund purpose language was more encompassing of what the fee could do. Gordon gave the committee an overview of the referendum draft. She noted that there would be an increase of fee renewal time frame from 3 years to 4 years because of the impact writing a renewal can have on the function of a committee. Lucia and why the ratio had changed between the cap and the academic credit rate for potential increases. Gordon stated that portion of the proposal was copied from the previous proposal and was unsure why the ratio had changed. She asked the committee what they wanted to do. Winkelman stated that raising it to \$14.00 was too much for a student fee. Gordon agreed that the potential raise to \$14.00 would discourage students from voting for the fee. Lucia suggested keeping the ratio the same and allow the committee to raise the fee to \$1.00 per academic credit per quarter, not to exceed \$10.00. Alexander shared that the AS VP for Student Life that wrote the last referendum, Zach Dugovich, wrote the fee that way because he was unaware of how minimum wage would affect the fund. Winkelman wondered how the new minimum wage increase would affect the operations budget in the future. Riopelle said the staff and office expenses would decrease \$12-13,000 the next year because they had funded three pilot positions in the Environmental & Sustainability Programs. Winkelman said those positions would hope to be operationalized through the Associated Students. Pappas asked about the name change. Gordon said Willamette University had that name, Equity, Justice and Sustainability, for their fund. She was hoping to embody more of what the fee could encompass. Pappas suggested putting Sustainability first in the name to make it an easier transition from SAF and wondered if the language would need to be altered to include more discussion on equity and justice. Gordon felt the language did include equity and justice in the language and would place sustainability at the first word. Riopelle said the conference he went to showed him how green energy fees were rebranding and expanding. He had concern about what rebranding the fee would do to the work done in the past to build the recognition of the fund. Goodnow felt it was important to consider the fear of changing the name, but felt it was the time to do it. She worried about losing the word action in the phrasing. She like adding equity and justice in the name to encompass more of what the fee does. Gordon felt the fund was at a good place to be able to make changes because the name was inspired by the action of the committee that year. Rayner Fried suggested the committee have a bigger discussion on how the committee would embody the new name and values.

Pappas wondered if the new name would narrow the focus if they removed the word “action”. Goodnow said when students hear sustainability they think environmental and felt the new name broadens the scope of projects students could ask for funds for. Riopelle suggested extending the renewal period to 5 years. He thought the committee needed time to prove their worth for another increase and 5 years would allow time for data collection and review. Lucia said if the committee were to increase the fee renewal to 5 years then the committee should include a higher cap than \$10.00. Based on estimated calculated he said a \$10.00 increase would only be a growth rate of 5% for the fund and felt that might not be enough over 5 years. Riopelle said the current work load of the SAF was not sustainable and if the fund continued to grow considerably they would need to include more staff to operate. Lucia said he had a problem with the 5 year renewal because the fee as it was stated would not be enough to counteract inflation and growth. Gordon asked how the committee felt about the initial fee amount of \$.80 to \$8.00. Alexander said the purpose of the fee should determine the fee amount. He suggested the committee should estimate the amount the fund needed annually to function and then estimate the cost per student. Riopelle wondered how to increase the accessibility of the fund to students without having to add another staff member to help run the program. Gordon wondered what rate the committee should put the fee at to function at the same level but not put too much work on the SAF program staff. Riopelle mentioned that the university would continue to see increased enrollment so that should be considered. Winkelman suggested raising the base fee and the potential increase rate. Mogilevsky asked what amount of interest would be needed to hire another student staff. Riopelle estimated about \$8,000 a year. Winkelman stated that the increase in staff would increase the amount of projects coming into the program. LaVallee reminded everyone that minimum wage would be increasing over the next few years. Gordon stated she like the idea of \$.90 per academic credit per quarter capped at \$9.00 with the ability to increase to \$1.20 and \$12.00 over the 4 year period.

***MOTION: SAF-18-W-14 by Winkelman***

Approval of the 2017-2018 Mandatory Student Fees Sustainability, Equity & Justice Fund Referendum Proposal with the stipulation of the change in the title of the fee and a change in finances to be \$.90 per academic credit per quarter capped at \$9.00, with the ability to increase to \$1.20 and \$12.00.

Second: Lucia Vote: 8-0-0 Action: ***Passed***

***Annie Gordon adjourned the meeting at 6:01 PM.***