

Western Washington University

Legislative Affairs Council

Wednesday, October 31st

VU 462A

Present: Natasha Hessami (ASVP for Governmental Affairs), Henry Pollet (Legislative Liaison), Patrick Kissinger (Local Issues Coordinator), James Pai (ESC Advocacy Director), Katie Winkleman (ESP Director), Kayl Gillihan (SAIRC Coordinator), Colton Redtfeldt, Maddie Rackers, Grace LaMonte, Gabbi Nazari, Brandon Lane, Bennett Massey

Absent:

Advisor: Leti Romo

Secretary: Grace Drechsel

Guests: Hunter Eider, Nora Harren (REP Director)

MOTIONS

LAC-18-F-14 Remove the presentation of proposals on State Need Grant Part 1 and 2, and Dedicated Revenue. Add presentations on mental health, K-12 Sex education, and

LAC-18-F-15 Approve Hunter Eider's funding request for a GOTV music video.

LAC-18-F-16 Pass the Minutes from 10-24-2018.

Natasha Hessami called the meeting to order at 4:34pm.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ADDITIONS AND CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

MOTION LAC-18-F-14 by Hessami

Remove the presentation of proposals on State Need Grant Part 1 and 2 and Dedicated Revenue. Add presentations on mental health, K-12 Sex education, and Paid postage.

Second: Pollet

Vote: 12-0-0

Action: *Passed*

III. ACTION ITEMS

a. GOTV Music Video Funding Request

Hunter Eider presented on his funding request for the GOTV Music Video, which is an action item this week. Last week, he talked about doing a video for increasing voter turnout and civic engagement. The video will be released after the deadline to register to vote this year, but it could still be a fun video to entice people to get their ballot in. The video can also be used in future years. It will be a song parody of “Rock the Boat” and he wrote lyrics and was hoping to have it filmed in the VU. It hasn’t been filmed yet due to some scheduling mishaps, but it will be filmed by this weekend at the very latest. The Communications director has approved the song lyrics, and it was choreographed this weekend. It was supposed to be filmed on Monday the 29th, but Eider found out on Sunday that one of the dancers had a scheduling conflict. He emailed the head videographer about filming on Monday, and they never got back to him about rescheduling. He checked in today and no one was in the office, so he is waiting for them to respond. If the AS videographer cannot do it, then he will have his friend film the video.

Hessami expressed concern that it hasn’t been filmed yet, and voting closes Tuesday at 8pm. Ballots should be in by Monday, and she is worried about it getting edited in time. She is worried about it getting released on the 5th when voting is done on the 6th. Harren asked if Eider has planned where he will distribute/post this video. He said that originally, he just planned to have it sent out through his personal social media accounts and the REP Facebook page.

Redtfeldt pointed out that if we can use this video in later years, it is valuable that we have someone wanting to do this video right now and has it organized and ready to go. If we’re going to do a video like this anyway at some point in the future, why not do it now when we have all of the connections already?

Lane said that he would like to look at the lyrics and drop anything that is specific to this election, that way the video can be used over and over in future years. It’s not always the 6th, it’s the first Tuesday of the month unless that Tuesday is a 1st, and the lyrics include the language of getting your ballot in by November 6th.

Winkleman said that we can do a quick title slide at the end with year-specific information, and then we can change out the information every year. That is what the ESP has done in previous years, and it takes about 30 minutes max.

Hessami asked how everyone feels with tabling the vote until next Wednesday, conditional on the video being done by Tuesday. Eider said that because he said it would be done Monday and it’s not done yet, that it’s very possible that there could be another scheduling mishap. He said he will work with the soonest possible date that works with everyone, and from there he will talk to his friends about video editing. Winkleman said that she would feel a bit more comfortable having the AS Video office do it, from the standpoint of if we’re paying dancers and other creatives for working on this video, then why aren’t we paying the videographer and editor? It’s already built in for the video office to work with students and other offices on projects like this. If there ends up being another scheduling mishap with them, Eider could take it as an opportunity to revise the lyrics and storyboard and then take time with it to use it for every election. If it works out that the video office can do it, awesome, but if not, then use it to take the time that you need.

Hessami asked if the dancers would be okay with a later payment if we table the vote until next Wednesday. Eider said that they already know it will be a couple weeks for the payment. Pollet said he is uncomfortable telling people that they will get paid when the committee has not yet made the decision on whether or not to fund this, so we should vote today.

Hessami echoed Lane’s point that the lyrics should be neutral. Eider said that he will change the lyrics “Vote by the 6th of November” to “Vote by early November”. That will make it more

MOTION LAC-18-F-15 by *Winkleman*

Approve Hunter Eider's funding request for a GOTV music video.

Second: Redtfeldt Vote: 10-1-1 Action: *Passed*

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION LAC-18-F-16 by *Pollet*

Pass the Minutes from 10-24-2018.

Second: Nazari Vote: 11-0-1 Action: *Passed*

V. CONSENT ITEMS

a. Support for Survivors of Sexual Violence (*Nazari*)

Pollet advised Nazari to change the language of "ASWWU" to "WSA" since this is for the WSA-wide agenda. Rackers asked Nazari if she wants to include statistics about 1 in 16 men being the victim of sexual violence. Nazari asked for suggestions on the "Asks". Hessami said that we are waiting patiently to hear what DeVos's new guidelines for SA on college campuses will be, and it will be more lenient towards the accused. Pai said that he knows that the EOO said that if the guidelines were to change, WWU would still stick with the preponderance of the evidence standard, and if we want to include it in the "asks" to make that a WA state law. Pollet said that it might not be possible.

b. Prepaid Postage (*Harren*)

c. Civilian Oversight boards (*Rackers and Pai*)

Rackers said that they would like the information that is specific to Bellingham taken out since the proposal is going to WSA. They also proposed the idea of adding an "ask" about not letting police departments corroborate with ICE. We are within 100 miles of the Canadian border, so they are not sure the legality of it. Hessami pointed out that we are bringing it to WSA, so it's not WWU specific, and not all campuses are within 100 miles. Pai added that some of them are, such as the campuses in Seattle, because the rule applies to coastlines, so several campuses are in a place where ICE has jurisdiction and the right to detain individuals without the consent of the local police departments and subject them to deportation proceedings. We could ask police departments to not honor detainee requests from ICE, which asks them to hold the individual if they are found to be undocumented so that ICE can come and pick them up. Departments who decide not to honor them are then subject to federal defunding. Pollet said that although he does personally agree with the ask, there is no way that is going to get through WSA and it does endanger the rest of the asks. He doesn't know if that's even legal if WA State could say that, because it would go against federal law. Pai said it's under a municipal jurisdiction. Pollet said that he doesn't know that the state could even

recommend that the municipalities could do that. Hessami said that that could be a good ask for Local Lobby day.

Hessami said that we need to trim down the proposal. If this does pass through WSA, we will include all of this language and statistics to inform students. This is something that Hessami and Pollet will do. Nazari said that trimming it down is fine, but make sure it still identifies the groups that are targeted by police brutality. It would be detrimental to remove that information. Some of the statistics are important as well.

d. Consent/Sex Ed in K-12 (*LaMonte*)

Hessami wanted to take out some language of “we believe” to make it more absolute and assertive. Romo wanted to clarify what LaMonte means by “all campuses” – college or high school? Pollet said that we should keep it to college campuses, because WSA historically doesn’t care as much about high school campuses than university campuses. As college students going to lobby and sharing our experiences, it makes more sense to focus on college. We could use the blanket statement of “all campuses”. Pai said maybe we should include that it’s ridiculous that the first time students are taught about consent is when they get to college. Hessami said that would be something that we include in language when talking to a legislator, but to them, that’s maybe not absurd, and using that word can be very accusatory.

e. Housing/Rent Control (*Lane*)

Pollet said he’s worried about the likelihood of getting any money ask that isn’t higher-ed related getting through WSA. We are asking for a lot of money already through SNG and other higher-ed issues. WSA is a little more conservative when it comes to housing initiatives. Hessami said it is ultimately important to connect this to students. A lot of students are renters and a lot of students are homeless. The way to alleviate some of this could be through the SNG, because if you are able to alleviate tuition through SNG, the tuition money saved can go to housing. The problem with this is that at WSA, you have students from Pullman and students from downtown Seattle, and those are two very different housing markets. Something like supporting the repeal on the state ban on rent control is something that a lot of other groups will be lobbying on, and student support could be really powerful. But our most important monetary ask will be the State Need Grant. Focusing more on repealing the state ban and the tenant protections that don’t cost any money would be more realistic. Pollet said we can talk about this on our own legislative agenda, it will just be harder to get through WSA. We can also see what the Washington State Tenants Union have as their main goals. In conclusion: nix the monetary asks, focus on tenant protections.

We have to keep our legislative agenda to 7-8 items. Pollet said that’s true of what we have in our pamphlet, but we can have other things that we are lobbying for that aren’t on the one-pager.

VI. Reports

a. VP for Governmental Affairs

Last Thursday was the state candidate forum, and 3 out of the 4 Republicans did not show up. It still went well. Harren was the co-facilitator.

The chemistry department had 3 faculty of color. One of them left last spring, and he cited a toxic work environment. Another one was not able to get his contract renewed over the summer. Last Friday, about 40 people went to CSE Dean Johnson’s office to tell him that minority students in CSE don’t feel supportive. He was very dismissive. He kept saying that it’s not in his jurisdiction and

that is why he hasn't done anything, and the only suggestion that he had was to do a climate survey. The meeting was tense.

Nazari asked what he was saying was not in his jurisdiction. Hessami said that people asked him to have a more diverse speaker panel, having mandatory faculty meetings to inform faculty about these issues, having students on hiring committees, etc. He was asked to take action in the next week and send an email to all of CSE informing them of what would happen.

Winkleman said that there are a lot of parallels in Huxley. Their dean also cited that a lot of things were out of his jurisdiction. Additionally, that also happened 4 years ago when there was a really racist faculty in Fairhaven. A lot of the decisions/negotiations are often taken place with provosts and VPs. Deans are equally as frustrated, but not being heard by provosts and VPs. Winkleman said that might be a point where university policy is the issue.

Pollet met with Bill Lyon after sending out an email. Lyon said it's very surprising that Dean Johnson said no to these things, because they actually are in his jurisdiction.

This issue is applicable to the Pre-Healthcare Decision Package. The proposal uses words like "diversity, equity, etc.", and says "Western has a proven track record of recognizing and responding to students to suit the changing needs of diversity..." Pollet is arguing no, WWU does not have a history of recognizing and responding to students. We can't, in good faith, lobby to the legislature for \$60 million for CSE if CSE has repeatedly demonstrated institutionalized racism, discrimination, and repeated lack of support for their students and faculty of color, ethnic groups and LGBTQIA+ folks. Sabbah was CC'ed and we are escalating this to the provost.

Pollet said that it is his understanding that with the board's current climate (and it is up to the board to decide whether or not to support this proposal), they will not support the proposal.

The stance is – we will not lobby for this, and we might even lobby against it, unless CSE has some rapid turnaround and conversations around climate, hiring and retention practices.

Lane asks – if the college ends up resisting this, do you have an idea of what you want the college to do? Hessami said that they are working on this, and they need to find out what the college can legally do in order to ask them to do the right things. They are talking with university legislators, Becca and Joe. There are some soft asks that costs an email and 2 hours of some people's times. They are free and easy. Hessami said that if anyone wants to be involved any further to please let her know. She might need help with some research.

b. REP Local Issues Coordinator

Kissinger is working on the Local Candidate Forum taking place Thursday night. He encourages everyone to attend. Grace Drechsel and Kissinger are asking the questions. There will be an ASL interpreter. There will be food there also.

c. REP Legislative Liaison

Pollet has been working on all the stuff in CSE. He is working with Guillermo from the WSA to talk about some potential bylaw changes.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

a. WSA General Assembly

A doodle poll will be going out for training on how to present the proposals at WSA. There will be food!

Hessami adjourned the meeting at 5:54pm.

DRAFT