



## Western Washington University Associated Students

### AS Board of Directors

January 22, 2019

VU 567

**Board Members:** *Present:* Millka Solomon (President), Levi Eckman (VP for Academic Affairs), Ama Monkah (VP for Activities), Natasha Hessami (VP for Governmental Affairs), and Anne Lee (VP for Student Life)

*Absent:* Camilla Mejía (VP for Diversity)

**Advisor:** Leti Romo (Assistant Director for Student Representation & Governance)

**Secretary:** Nate Jo (AS Board Assistant for Internal Committees)

**Guest(s):** Casey Hayden (Assistant Director for Student Activities)

#### Motions:

**ASB-19-W-42** Approval of the meeting minutes from January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-W-43** Revision to the agenda: Personnel Policy added to Action Items –Guests. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-W-44** Tabling of the Personnel Policy agenda item. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-W-45** Approval of the AS WWU Constitution. *Passed.*

*Millka Solomon, AS President, called the meeting to order at 4:03pm.*

#### I. Approval of Minutes

*MOTION ASB-19-W-42 By Eckman*

To approve the meeting minutes from January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

*Second: Hessami*

*Vote: 5-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

#### II. Revisions to the Agenda

Solomon mentioned that the Personnel Policy change was discussed at the last board meeting and should be added to the agenda under Action Items – Guests.

*MOTION ASB-19-W-43 by Hessami*

To add Personnel Policy to the agenda: Action Items - Guests

*Second: Eckman*

*Vote: 5-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

#### III. Public Forum (*comments from students and the community*)

#### IV. Information Items - Guests

##### A. Shred the Contract Resolution – Lee – Doc 1

Anne Lee introduced Michael Prostka (STC member) and asked him to speak on the resolution. Prostka stated that footnotes had been added to cite sources in the document and that the Board of Trustees was added to the distribution list in the last clause.

Levi Eckman asked if the signature spot for the VP of Business and Operations would be removed since the position is vacant. Lee asked if all seven board members votes were required to pass a resolution.

Leti Romo said that she would check and that the board could vote on the resolution the following week since the new VP for Business and Operations would be elected by then.

## **V. Action Items - Guests**

### **A. Personnel Policy**

Ama Monkah said that there were a lot of pros and cons with the policy to allow AS employees to keep a position for two years. Monkah gave the example of a senior marketing major who might want a specific position in the AS but not be able to access it due to an employee keeping their job for two years.

Casey Hayden (Assistant Director for Student Activities) stated that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. Hayden said that it would be hard for a student to compete with the experience of someone who had just done the job. Even in a fair process, the person who just did the job likely has more qualifications than anyone else applying and would be more likely to get the job. Opening every AS job every year may create a false sense of opportunity for other students who don't know they are going up against previous position holders.

Monkah stated that it was extremely useful to work with Douglas Van Druff (AS Club Event Planning Facilitator) because they had worked in the Club Hub previously and were able to help with understanding processes.

Eckman asked if student senators would be able to keep their position for two years since they were classified as hourly AS employees.

Hayden said that the Personnel Policy does not apply to elected officials, so it would not affect student senators. Hayden also stated that the policy could be evaluated on a case by case basis so that some positions would be opened every year.

Romo mentioned the role of supervisors in recommending whether a student should continue in their current role.

Hayden said that directors shouldn't have stroke of the pen power to determine whether a student comes back but should have conversations earlier on about job performance.

Since the last meeting, the policy was changed to state that any employee placed on a performance contract would not be eligible to return the following year to their position.

Natasha Hessami said that performance contracts might not address students performing mediocre work or address relational concerns because performance contracts are only used in severe situations.

Hessami also questioned whether personnel policy matters should go to the board or the senate in the future. Hayden said that there could be a performance review process through the Personnel Committee to address mediocre work. Hayden said that the Personnel Committee could be the final stop for many personnel issues in the future so that the board and the senate wouldn't have to deal with day to day operations of the AS. Eckman asked how often performance contracts were used in the AS. Hayden said that there were typically three to seven per year.

Eckman said that performance contracts often may not be used even if they should be and said that he was concerned that students could do the bare minimum of their job responsibilities to avoid performance contracts.

Hayden mentioned that the AS was an anomaly since companies in the real world do not make employees reapply every year. Hayden said that only about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of all employees return to the AS every year. This policy has been talked about for several years but was never tested.

Romo asked if there would be a deadline for those that wanted to keep their position the next year. Hayden confirmed.

Samy Baxley (AS Alumni Coordinator) said that there should be a performance review process that occurs throughout the year and that problems need to be addressed earlier. Hessami brought up imposter syndrome being an issue for women of color and questioned what backgrounds and factors could influence a person's decision to continue in their position.

Hayden stated that employees frequently moved up in the AS or switched departments. Solomon said that she was uncomfortable passing the policy since it would be a huge structural change to the AS and wasn't presented to the board before the previous meeting. Lee asked if other universities had a similar model for hiring and asked what kind of culture it created in their AS organizations.

Romo said that the WWU AS has a unique structure among student organizations. In most other universities professional staff members would do student hiring as positions opened instead of having a student run personnel office.

Solomon said that she would rather the AS take a year to think about it, examine mechanisms, and see which positions to allow continuation in.

Hessami asked how long professional staff members had been talking about the policy and Hayden said that it had been discussed on and off for about seven years, but it had never gone to the board before.

Hessami said that there could be a pilot year to test the policy and make changes to it. Eckman said that there should be data collecting and conversations with each position in the AS before moving forward with the policy. Eckman stated that the issue could become cyclical since positions are hired in the spring, but elected officials do not begin until Summer Quarter.

Hayden said that the change might not be as big as it sounds since very few employees reapply for the same positions. Hayden said that there would still be 70+ jobs posted every spring.

Hessami said that if issues with mediocrity are addressed then it would be prudent to pass the policy since spring hiring is about to begin.

Solomon said that she would rather it be passed next year after there was more time to think about it and compare policies of other universities. Solomon asked for data on the number of people that have historically reapplied for their same position and models from other schools. Romo said that the information needed might not be tangible and that the policy would have to be tested before knowing exactly what impacts it would have on the AS.

Eckman requested information on how many students reapply for every office, the reasoning students have for wanting the same position, and potential access barriers for graduate students. Eckman recommended having a committee draft a list of quantifiable questions to research the issue. Eckman questioned whether the policy would benefit students or processes.

Baxley said that it was impossible to see the whole picture without doing a trial year. Baxley stated that since she already knew how the Alumni Coordinator job worked and her supervisor was happy with her work, she would almost certainly get the job again, giving other applicants false hope.

Lee mentioned the hiring process of University Residences which has an evaluation process for Resident Advisers that wish to return to their position. The RAs have a deadline to declare their intent to return and then they go through a separate hiring process instead of competing directly with first time RA applicants.

Hessami mentioned the rehiring process for the University of Washington Associated students which requires students to undergo a robust review process. Hessami suggested

having a returner application process in January or February which would also prevent employees from growing complacent.

Solomon stated that this could be a problem with the hiring process itself if AS employees are automatically favored.

Hayden said that AS employees that reapply for their position already have knowledge and experience with the job responsibilities, so they are more likely to get the job in a fair application process. Lee said that having a separate process for returners would level the playing field for first time applicants.

Courtney Yoshiyama (Student Senator) said that the returner RA process made sense. The returning RA's have to go through a review process to make sure that they would do a good job the next year but there are enough positions that new applicants still have opportunities to be hired.

Tatum Buss (Student Senator) agreed and said that the process also worked well for returners in the summer staff positions.

Adah Barenburg (Student Senator) asked if the Personnel Policy could be changed in the future. Hayden said that it could be changed at any time.

Hessami said that she would vote yes if clause similar to UW's rehire process was added. Eckman said that he would like to schedule meetings to talk about it and still had several questions with the policy. Lee said that they would vote yes if the discussed amendments were added. Monkah said that she would vote yes with the discussed changes.

Hessami suggested tabling the item for discussion at the following meeting.

*MOTION ASB-19-W-44 By Hessami*

To table Personnel Policy agenda: Action Items – Guests.

*Second: Monkah*

*Vote: 5-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

## **VI. Personnel Items** *(subject to immediate action)*

### **VII. Action Items - Board**

#### **A. ASWWU Constitution – Hessami – Doc 2**

Hessami stated that a decision on voting structures and positions names needed to be made before the special election but that other parts of the constitution could be discussed later for spring elections.

Maya Noesen (Student Senator) stated that they had conversations regarding the voting membership of the Senate Pro Tempore. Eckman stated that the Senate Pro Tempore voting on the Executive Board would be beneficial. Because there is a precedent of bringing all AS matters to the board, the Senate Pro Tempore would be able to refer appropriate matters to the Student Senate. The Senate Pro Tempore would be non-voting except for procedural matters and to break ties in the Student Senate.

Hessami agreed with Eckman and said that it was also important to keep a seven member executive board for a smoother transitions that students would better understand.

Eckman stated that the constitution should go out for a vote every three years and there would be a time in the future when the senate gains more power that the Senate Pro Tempore would no longer be a voting member of the Executive Board.

Yoshiyama asked what would need to change for the Senate Pro Tempore to be non-voting on the Executive Board and voting on the Student Senate. Eckman stated that precedent and structural systems need to change for power to be redistributed to the

senate. Solomon said that when the Student Senate gained equal power to the Executive Board, the executive board would likely want to remove the Senate Pro Tempore. Hessami said that there would be a hyperlink on the voting ballot to show more information but only a summary would appear on the ballot. Hessami noted that the vice chair would be appointed by the president instead of the previous line of succession. Eckman said that the vice chair was previously the VP for Business and Operations because it was the second position created on the AS Board. Eckman asked who chose the language that appeared on the ballot. Hessami stated that the elections coordinator was responsible for choosing the language. Barenburg recognized that many people had looked over the constitution and thanked everyone involved for their hard work. Yoshiyama asked if the Student Union Board would be implemented next year. Hessami said that it was decided to make it a standing committee of the AS instead of its own governing body. Monkah stated that the VP for Activities would be the chair of that committee.

*MOTION ASB-19-W-45 by Solomon*  
To approve the AS WWU Constitution.

*Second: Eckman*

*Vote: 5-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

Hessami presented the student fees document and said that only main campus students pay fees. Eckman said that students could not be exempt from the S&A fee.

#### **VIII. Information Items - Board**

#### **IX. Consent Items** *(subject to immediate action)*

#### **X. Board Reports**

**Ama Monkah, VP for Activities** stated that she met with Jenn Cook and Raquel Vigil concerning carry forward requests from clubs. Monkah said that she had received a grant to attend a conference in Atlanta that would help in advocacy for black students on campus.

**Anne Lee, VP for Student Life** reported that they were working on forum planning. Solomon and Lee attended the Public Safety Committee meeting in which police de-escalation, non-lethal weapons, and a Western safety app were discussed. Lee stated that they went to an RA gathering to talk to students about things going on with University Residences. Lee said that it was hard to see RAs going through the same things that happened two years ago and wanted them to organize again but understood that it takes a lot of energy.

**Levi Eckman, VP for Academic Affairs** reported that one-on-ones with senators were going well and would happen every two weeks. Eckman said that he was working on developing bonding time and tabling in Red Square for senators. Eckman stated that he discussed getting the Senate Pro Tempore on the Board of Trustees with Melynda Huskey. The request would be sent to the President Randhawa and then go to the Board of Trustees chair. Eckman stated that a constituent had brought up a concern with a leadership course curriculum being developed by an outside company. Eckman said that third party companies should not be allowed to develop curriculum for colleges and that he would bring this concern to the Academic Coordinating Commission. Eckman stated

that he had invited the Faculty Senate members and college deans to introduce themselves and their positions to the student senate.

Barenburg said that CBE was bringing in a diversity consultant and discussing revenue and budgeting for online classes as well as discussing online labs. CSE senators were facing hostility from faculty members. Huxley senators were discussing the burden and lack of availability of internships. Woodring senators had a forum on February 4<sup>th</sup> on increasing student voices in college education and the burden on students of color to educate white peers. The At-Large senators met with Lee to discuss Shred the Contract and the first year experience. Barenburg said that ACC was discussing the two lab credit requirements and considering requiring four writing classes. Eckman stated that the Student Technology Fee committee had finished for the quarter after operating very efficiently and would begin reviewing abstracts again in the spring.

Eckman stated that there would be a “Decolonizing Anthropology” forum on February 27<sup>th</sup> in the Anthropology Lounge in Artzen Hall.

**Millka Solomon, AS President,** reported that she had been planning the student forum. Solomon said that she was excited about the Western safety app which would allow student to directly contact the police and send in pictures to report incidents. Solomon said that she met with students from the Divestment Club and that they would like to pass a resolution in the board and the senate to divest from dirty energy.

**Natasha Hessami, VP for Governmental Affairs,** reported that the Structural Review Committee had taken up much of the week and thanked everyone for their work on the constitution. Hessami stated that about 70 students along with board members went to the Western Intersection Lobby Day on February 18<sup>th</sup>.

## **XI. Other Business**

Romo stated that a candidate forum for the VP for Business and Operations special election would take place on Monday, 5-7pm in Fraser 101.

*Millka Solomon, AS President, adjourned this meeting at 5:56pm.*