



Western Washington University Associated Students Sustainability, Equity and Justice Fund

Thursday, January 24th, 2019 1:00PM VU 460

Members:

Present: Anne Lee (ASVP for Student Life), Kate Rayner Fried (AS Sustainable Action Fund Education Coordinator), Johnathan Riopelle (AS Sustainable Action Fund Grant Program Coordinator), Scott Dorough (Campus Energy Manager), Katie Winkelman (ESP Director), Seth Vidaña (AS Sustainability Director), Grace Wang, Turner Campbell, Aden Nevler, Emma Lewis

Advisor: Greg McBride

Secretary: Grace Drechsel

Guests:

Motions:

SEJ-18-W-5 Pass the SEJF Budget FY18-19.

Anne Lee called the meeting to order at 1:00PM.

I. Introductions

II. Approval of Minutes

The committee agreed to pass the SEJ minutes from the previous meeting.

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Update on Carbon Rec Purchases

Riopelle said that he has been meeting with Karen McKinnon in order to finalize facilitation of the carbon rec purchases. Next week, he hopes to have the final number for the purchased recs.

IV. ACTION ITEM

a. SEJF Budget FY18-19

Riopelle clarified that he is bringing the budget breakdown in response to some inquiry by the committee. The question that arose was – what percentage of the budget is going to the new classified staff? Last year, the allocation was 35% of the budget. The proposal presented two weeks ago, which included the proposed permanent staff, would bring the program expenses to 37.09% - an ever-so-slight increase. This allows the program expenses to be consistent with the amount of money spent on personnel in the overall budget. If we don't utilize some of the funds for additional labor, that would drop us down to 25% program expenses – giving us \$260,000 available for grants, over an 80% increase from last year. He believes that this proposal is the opportunity to begin a correction for that.

MOTION SEJ-18-W-5 by *Wang*

Pass the SEJF Budget FY18-19.

Second: Nevler Vote: 5-0-1 Action: *Passed*

Nevler asked how much of the funds available for grants were used last year. Riopelle said that he will have that information next week when he goes over where the program stands. Wang said that in the history of the program, grant funds have never been fully used. Riopelle agreed and said that last year, they granted over \$400,000 – that is not sustainable with our current amount of staff. To provide a quality product, the program needs additional bandwidth.

McBride clarified what time period this budget covers. Riopelle answered that this is the budget for 2019, since one was never approved. Whatever amount is not used this year would go back into the grant fund for next year, with the caveat that it is essentially unusable due to the lack of labor. Next year, if they have another individual on board, the program would be utilize this template for the FY20 budget.

Vidaña gave context that Riopelle and other positions in the program have known, when hired on, that the longevity of the position is tied to the approval of the fee. However, as long as students vote for the fee, the position is permanent. McBride wanted to clarify if the new position is finalized since the budget passed. Vidaña answered that this approval gives the program the ability to move forward with the process of job creation – communicating with both the program and HR. He acknowledged that at some point, the job description should come back to the committee. It feels like overkill to bring it back for a vote, since the program is responsible for the staff, but he would at least like committee feedback on the job description.

Lee asked Vidaña to explain the two-vote split decision. He explained that a separate option would be for the program to bring back the documents for the job description, but that wouldn't be ideal. Nevler asked if it is in the power of the committee or future committees to rescind the position if it is determined that it isn't needed. McBride answered that it is the power of the committee, but it is a difficult decision, because that would require laying someone off.

Vidaña asked what the concerns are with the new position. Winkelman answered that it would have been nice to have a more clear understanding of what the new position will entail. She understands that the purpose is more bandwidth for the program, but she is still unclear of what values and responsibilities the new position will have. Positional boundaries for an organizational makeup are important to define before bringing a new person on.

Wang said that she does not have hesitation because she trusts her colleagues. One thing that resonated with her was that the increased bandwidth will help the program do better with what they have – it's a quality over quantity issue. She is proud of her colleagues for identifying where they need support and ask for it. Also, the money is there. McBride said that he is just trying to be clear about the commitment that is being made.

Vidaña charted out two paths: first, the program has additional staff and can make better use of the funds. The second is that additional staff is not hired, and the fee is decreased – which is fine, if that is what the committee wants.

V. Other Business

Rayner-Fried said that it sounds like there needs to be future conversation about how the hiring process will look and what it will entail. Vidaña proposed a subcommittee of folks interesting in co-creating the job description. He added that this group could probably bring something forward in about two months. Anne said that we could discuss this subcommittee in future meetings.

Riopelle said that next week, there will be two large grant abstracts to be looking at next week. He is pleased that grants are being brought forward. Lee asked Riopelle to give a review of what happens in terms of grants after the abstract is brought to committee. Riopelle answered that the purpose of an abstract is to give the committee an idea of what the group wants to do, and the committee's approval or disapproval signals if the committee believes the grant is in line with the purpose of the fund. If the abstract is approved, then the team comes back with the input from the committee and a more detailed application, along with a PowerPoint presentation, and the committee has an opportunity to ask direct questions. If the process sounds exhaustive, that is because large grants involve a significant amount of money.

Anne Lee adjourned the meeting at 1:38PM.