



## Western Washington University Associated Students

### AS Board of Directors

March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019

VU 567

**Board Members:** *Present:* Millka Solomon (President), Levi Eckman (VP for Academic Affairs), Camilla Mejía (VP for Diversity), Natasha Hessami (VP for Governmental Affairs), and Anne Lee (VP for Student Life), Nate Jo (VP for Business and Operations)

*Absent:* Ama Monkah (VP for Activities)

**Advisor:** Leti Romo

**Secretary:** Grace Drechsel (AS Board Assistant for Representation Committees)

**Guest(s):** Soleil de Zwart (AS Review), Kurt Willis (University Resources), Karen Stout (Institute for Leadership), Vernon D. Johnson (Institute for Leadership), Abdul Malik Ford (Black Student Union), Ian Ferrer (AS Assessment), Edward Johnson (Outback Farm)

### Motions:

**ASB-19-W-58** To approve the minutes from March 1<sup>st</sup> and March 8<sup>th</sup> with edits. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-W-59** Remove Activities Job Description from Info Items. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-W-60** Extend time on Outback Farm Assessment by 5 minutes. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-W-61** Approve the Outback Farm Assessment's logistical recommendations and 1 additional summer apprentice. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-W-62** Extend time on Housing and Dining Rate increase by 15 minutes. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-W-63** Extend time on Housing and Dining Rate increase by 10 minutes. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-W-64** Approve the proposed Housing and Dining 5% rate increase. *Failed.*

**ASB-19-W-65** Present the Housing and Dining Rate Increase to the Student Senate. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-W-66** Pass all classification edits with the edit of the error concerning the classification of Club Facilitators. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-W-67** Table the info item "CHSC Smoking Policy" until next meeting. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-W-68** To approve Eric Baril for the AS Elections Board. *Passed.*

*Millka Solomon, AS President, called the meeting to order at 4:02pm.*

### I. Approval of Minutes

*MOTION ASB-19-W-58 By Jo*

To approve the minutes from March 1<sup>st</sup> and March 8<sup>th</sup> with edits.

*Second: Eckman*

*Vote: 6-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

### II. Changes to the Agenda

*MOTION ASB-19-W-59 By Solomon*

Remove Activities Job Description from Info Items.

*Second: Jo*

*Vote: 6-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

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

### IV. **Information Items - Guests**

#### A. Funding Request for Jesse Moore

Karen Stout and Vernon D. Johnson from the Institute for Leadership presented their idea to bring Jesse Moore back to WWU campus. Moore was the Western Alumnus of the Year a few years back, and was here Fall of 2017. The Institute is looking to give more students the opportunity to meet with him on campus. This would be part of an Alumnus and Residence pilot program, bringing a Western graduate with an exciting career to campus. They are looking to bring Jesse Moore to campus April 22<sup>nd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>.

Moore was a 2005 WWU graduate and BSU president. He was on Obama's team for about 8 years, and worked as a speechwriter for the last 2. Stout and Johnson said that any funding from the ASBOD would be helpful. Jo asked if there is any specific amount of money they are looking for. They answered somewhere between \$500-1,000. Hessami added that Moor has demonstrated leadership in racial justice and political activism throughout his career, and he would be the perfect guest for a student-centered event like this. Hessami added that they could also bring this funding ask to Legislative Affairs Council.

Mejía said that a couple years ago, Moore came to campus and visited the ESC. She wondered what activities or interactions would be planned this time around. They answered that they are very open to student recommendations, but currently they are looking to have him work with BSU, talk to students involved/interested in legislative affairs, etc. They thought about maybe utilizing Lakewood and having an event with him out there. Mejía asked why they want to bring Moore to campus this year instead of a different ESC alum who has not been here before. Johnson answered that Moore has shown interest in doing events like this on campus. He added that they will put out a call for nominations for who to bring to campus in future years. Mejía said that she would like to check in with Legislative Affairs Council to see if any of this could be funded by the LACF budget.

#### B. Outback Farm Assessment

Ian Ferrer, AS Assessment Coordinator, presented the assessment for the Outback Farm.

Eckman asked what changes are being made to increase access for the disabled community. Edward Johnson from the Outback Farm answered that they are working on a grant to get an ADA accessible pathway throughout the Outback all the way to the greenhouse, and ADA accessible raised beds (at wheelchair height).

Solomon pointed out that the section about increasing diversity is very vague. She asked if there are more conversations to be had in terms of this. Mejía said that she has been working with Weston from the Outback to bring ESC folks and there is talk about having

a program to farm vegetables that are native to certain lands – she said that conversations are definitely being had.

Hessami asked if this has gone through Personnel Committee. Jo said no, and these are not set in stone changes, they are just recommendations. Once they are approved by the Board, then they will go to the appropriate channels such as Personnel Committee. By passing this, it means that the Board simply supports the recommendations.

Hessami suggested hiring 1 additional work study summer position instead of 2. She asked if this would still be helpful and worthwhile to the Outback. Johnson answered that it would definitely still be helpful, because 2 work studies would be better than just 1 that they had last year.

Adah Barenburg, Senator-at-Large, asked if there are any other projects in the works to increase accessibility. Johnson answered that the pathway and the raised beds is what they are working on currently. He said that there is also talk of adding art pieces to the Outback that connect to social movements, or art by indigenous folks.

*MOTION ASB-19-W- 60 by Solomon*

Extend time on Outback Farm Assessment by 5 minutes.

*Second: Eckman Vote: 6-0-0 Action: Passed*

Eckman asked about the publicity position created for the Outback + SAIRC. Leti Romo added that there is already a marketing position in the SAIRC. Eckman was confused on why we have marketing in every office when we have a Communications Office. He said that he knows that Sam Frost, AS Communications Director, is passionate about having one central marketing office. #1 in the Assessment document would potentially create a lot of marketing positions in a lot of different offices.

Jo agreed with Eckman. They said that they would be comfortable passing the logistical recommendations and approving 1 additional summer position.

*MOTION ASB-19-W-61 By Jo*

Approve the Outback Farm Assessment's logistical recommendations and 1 additional summer apprentice.

*Second: Eckman Vote: 6-0-0 Action: Passed*

### C. Housing and Dining Rates Proposal

Leonard Jones and Kurt Willis were present to discuss the potential Housing and Dining Rates increase. Jones said that they have been planning a long-term housing and dining study in order to predict what the needs and desires of students will be in 10-15 years. In the meantime, they are planning the construction of a new residence hall and an inter-cultural assessment program, where staff would be living in residence halls and helping to create a welcoming environment for historically marginalized identities (they are looking into similar programs at schools across the country). They are also working with Langley and other staff to talk about the minimum wage increase to ensure adequate compensation for all students, and gender inclusive and gender-neutral housing.

Mejía said that all these plans are new to her, and she hasn't been contacted to help with any of this. She wondered what programs they are looking into. Jones answered the program at Colorado State. Mejía also asked why they are having only a couple of people taking on this huge task and responsibility to better the housing experience. Jones answered that the responsibility is not all on one person. They want to research other schools doing similar work and ask questions so mistakes aren't repeated. He also added that they are making sure that the program effort is intentional and well-defined in terms of duties and responsibilities from a staffing point of view so that no one is overworked.

Hessami had a question about the budget. She said that last year and next year, it looks like they are operating with more revenue than expenditures. She asked what their reserves look like, and also what prior increases in fees look like. They answered that Housing and Dining has two reserve funds: the first, all gross revenue goes into one fund, and they are sitting at about \$3 million right now (the Board of Trustees requires 1.6 million). They also have a larger reserve fund, the Renewal and Replacement reserve, which is currently at \$10 million for housing and \$2 million for the Viking Union. They said that today, they are recommending a 5% rate increase.

Jo acknowledged the presenters' commitment to increasing equity and inclusion in the Housing and Dining System. However, Jo said that they cannot in good conscious vote yes on this 5% fee increase. Students come to Western just to drop out quickly because they cannot afford housing and dining. This increase doesn't fit into the University Strategic Plan of increasing college affordability. Jo said that they could easily make cuts and find money elsewhere – for instance, why does everyone get free cable and other non-necessities when some students can't afford to eat?

Mejía asked, if this is approved and the rate is increased, when will planning and construction begin? They answered that the new residence hall would be coming first – they will be tearing down Highland Hall in November and reopening September 2021. They have an architect and developer working on those plans now. The long range plan is set to be finished between June and August of this year.

Jones acknowledged Jo's point. He said that while they were putting the budget together, they were sensitive to costs and the impact that would have on students. They have worked with other campus partners and food insecurity programs. They have done their best to assess all moving parts and come up with a rate that is necessary to operate the housing system.

Mejía echoed Jo in that she cannot vote yes on this. She is weary of diversity initiatives coming from the university without student input. She would love to be more involved in this process. She also added that she had an awful experience living in the residence halls as a student of color.

Barenburg echoed Jo's sentiment as well. She said that she will be moving off campus next year because of the cost of living on campus and buying a meal plan. She asked how the rate increase will be supporting the university's Strategic Plan? Jones answered that it will support the plan in a number of indirect ways, but nothing directly tied to the academic strategic plan. He added that they will be assessing the environmental impact of the new building, and "Sustainability and Ecology" will be one of three focus groups done on campus surrounding the new building (as well as "Equity and Justice" and "Safety and Security".)

Abdul Malik Ford, a guest, asked if there would be special trainings and increased pay for new Residence Advisors. He also asked if the proposed increase was passed in 2016-17. They answered that the 4% increase did get passed. Ford asked if anything special was done with the revenue from that increase. Jones answered that it helped with the minimum wage increase, to increase RA and RD compensation. Ford asked what the capacity of the new building will be. He answered 402. Ford asked if there is talk about expanding the dining hall to compensate for 300 additional students living on campus. They answered that the new residence hall is just a first step, and Ridgeway Commons will need to be re-looked at. Ford added that Edens North and Higginson also need some attention. Jones added that this is what the long-term study will take into consideration.

Eckman pointed out that they are talking about tearing down Highland Hall, but the Strategic Plan talks about an increasing enrollment each year. He asked where the 141 students will go next year with Highland is torn down and construction is happening. He also asked how long construction will last.

They answered that there will be 2 academic years without Highland Hall, and that is an issue of concern for them as well. However, they are working to get returner accounts up to cover that. They pointed out the broader question of what the long-term enrollment plan is, because the Strategic Plan talks a lot about growth in enrollment.

*MOTION ASB-19-W-62 By Solomon*

Extend time on Housing and Dining Rate increase by 15 minutes.

*Second: Hessami*

*Vote: 6-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

Eckman maintained that it is dangerous to remove a building from campus without having the answers to these questions. They responded that Housing is prepared to master-lease space off campus in the New York apartments to accommodate some students. Eckman asked if they would pay the same amount. They responded that these students would pay the rate of a single in Birnam Wood.

Hessami asked if they have contacted any other schools who have self-op dining systems to see what the financial impact would be. Jones answered no, but they will be reaching out if and when the decision to go self-op is made. Hessami said that it is obvious that WWU students do not support Aramark, and there is a very obvious disconnect between

efforts from the administrators and the motivations of the students. Hessami said that she does not support the increase because there has not been any consideration put towards self-operated dining system, something that students are actively organizing for. She said that the lack of commitment and interest in this issue is insulting to students.

Jones and Willis answered that Western has contracted with Aramark for 2.5 years. They could get the numbers concerning a self-op system from other schools, but they wouldn't know all of the embedded costs and subsidies. Also, it's not on their radar right now because breaking the contract with Aramark would come at a huge cost to students. Hessami said that maybe this issue should go to the Student Senate.

*MOTION ASB-19-W-63 By Solomon*

Extend time on Housing and Dining Rate increase by 10 minutes.

*Second: Lee*

*Vote: 6-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

Lee asked if there has been any discussion or consideration about having a pool of money to support students who are in financial emergency. They added that not every student can take out a loan, and this could be a good alternative. They also added that they are excited to hear more about equity and inclusion plans and the work being done at Colorado State, but they cannot vote on this without a commitment to working with Camilla and the ESC to develop these ideas. Willis answered that having a pool of money as a student emergency fund would violate financial aid laws.

Courtney Yoshiyama, Senator-at-large, pointed out the complaints that she has heard about disability accommodations for students in the dorms. Jones said that this will definitely be taken into consideration with the construction of new buildings.

Jones and Willis added that this will be presented at the Board of Trustees meeting on April 12<sup>th</sup>.

*MOTION ASB-19-W-64 By Eckman*

Approve the proposed Housing and Dining 5% rate increase.

*Second: Jo*

*Vote: 0-6-0*

*Action: Failed*

*MOTION ASB-19-W-65 By Eckman*

Present the Housing and Dining Rate Increase to the Student Senate.

*Second: Solomon*

*Vote: 6-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

## **V. Personnel Items**

### **A. Position Classification Changes**

Jo presented a document outlining a few changes to AS position classifications. Hessami asked if classification changes will continue to be made during the spring. Rachel Walsh, Personnel Director, answered no, this will be the last change. Jo noticed a small error

classifying the Club Facilitator position as currently being Program Support Staff 3 when it should be Program Support Staff 1.

*MOTION ASB-19-W-66 By Jo*

Pass all classification edits with the edit of the error concerning the classification of Club Facilitators.

*Second: Eckman*

*Vote: 6-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

## **VI. Information Items - Board**

### **A. AS Wage Determination**

Jo presented on this item. They said that the AS is facing minimum wage increases. The wage determination document wasn't designed for increases, so there are currently huge pay inequities. The AS hourly rates range from \$12/hr to \$18.87/hr. It is important to take into consideration pay equity and the work that all AS employees do.

*MOTION ASB-19-W-67 by Lee*

Table the info item "CHSC Smoking Policy" until next meeting.

*Second: Hessami*

*Vote: 6-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

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

*MOTION ASB-19-W-68 by Hessami*

To approve Eric Baril for the AS Elections Board.

*Second: Solomon*

*Vote: 6-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

## **X. Board Reports**

**Nate Jo, ASVP for Business and Operations** reported that they have been working on Budget Committee review, creating a gender-inclusive bathroom taskforce, and working with Mejía to hire a new AS Board Assistant for Diversity.

**Levi Eckman, ASVP for Academic Affairs** reported that the Faculty Senate meeting this week went very poorly. Procedure and Robert's Rules were used to silence the people of color in the room. Eckman said that he gave a statement to let the faculty know that students do NOT support faculty using racial slurs in the classroom and claiming "academic freedom". Both Millka Solomon and Dr. DeGraaff were silenced during the meeting.

Solomon said that she left the meeting in tears, and it was very difficult. In her capacity as a student of color, she did not want to attend the meeting, but felt that it was her duty as the AS President.

Eckman said that he was told not to attend the previous meeting, but they wouldn't be discussing the academic freedom issue. He learned recently that over an hour of that meeting was dedicated to that topic and he wasn't present.

Hessami said that in UPRC, a subcommittee of Faculty Senate that she attends, her invitation to speak on this issue was withdrawn. No time was allocated for her to discuss it, but she used her talk time to urge the representatives in the meeting to think about this and engage in conversations.

Eckman added that he has been working with Brent Carbajal and students can be granted academic accommodations in light of the recent attacks on Islam in New Zealand.

**Natasha Hessami, VP for Governmental Affairs,** reported that she engaged in a WILD Debrief meeting this week. She reported that the WILD organizing group were not happy with the conduct of the Board members who attended. The organizers were busy this afternoon and could not attend the meeting, but it will be on the agenda at the next meeting. Solomon asked Hessami to clarify what the inappropriate conduct was. Hessami answered that the claims were that the Board took credit for the event and that the Board members were acting very elitist on the actual trip. Solomon responded that the Board members did leave WILD early because they all drove together. Solomon said that she was on her period and was having very bad cramps. She added that none of the Board members took credit for WILD because no one was invited to plan it.

**Anne Lee, VP for Student Life,** reported that they are meeting with the Office of Sustainability next week to talk about student feedback regarding Sustainability, Equity, and Justice committee.

***Millka Solomon, AS President, adjourned this meeting at 6:03pm.***