



## Western Washington University Associated Students

### AS Board of Directors

April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019

VU 567

**Board Members:** *Present:* Millka Solomon (AS President), Levi Eckman (VP for Academic Affairs), Nate Jo (VP for Business and Operations), Camilla Mejia (VP for Diversity), Natasha Hessami (VP for Governmental Affairs).  
**Advisor:** Leti Romo (Assistant Director for Student Representation & Governance)  
**Secretary:** Grace Drechsel (Board Assistant for Representation Committees)

#### Motions:

- ASB-19-S-10** Approval of the minutes from April 12<sup>th</sup>.  
**ASB-19-S-11** Move “Local Lobby Day” before the ASWWU Constitution and add ATF Fee recommendations under Info Items for 10 minutes presented by Hessami.  
**ASB-19-S-12** To pass the referendum for the Made to Waste Coffee Cup Initiative with the understanding that Hessami and Lee will work with the team to decide on language for the final initiative.  
**ASB-19-S-13** To pass the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County Agenda for Local Lobby Day.  
**ASB-19-S-14** Approve the ASWWU Constitution with discussed changes of adding “keeping students informed” to the preamble.

*Millka Solomon, AS President, called the meeting to order at 4:31pm.*

#### I. Approval of Minutes

*MOTION ASB-19-S-10*      *By Jo*  
Approval of the minutes from April 12<sup>th</sup>.

*Second: Mejia*

*Vote: 5-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

#### II. Revisions to the Agenda

*MOTION ASB-19-S-11*      *By Jo*  
Move “Local Lobby Day” before the ASWWU Constitution and add ATF Fee recommendations under Info Items for 10 minutes presented by Hessami.

*Second: Mejia*

*Vote: 5-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

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

#### IV. Information Items

A. Queer Resource Center Guild

Nicole from the QRC attended in order to present on the QRC Guild. She is the Community Engagement Coordinator of the QRC. This is an idea for a committee that meets every other week to discuss queer issues and have solidarity in the queer community. It would meet every other week, and all queer leaders would be invited to discuss problems that arise, membership consistency in queer clubs, etc. They are asking for \$2,500 for each of the pilot years, so \$5,000 total, and then will reevaluate the funding after two years. It will then be decided if it should be operationalized into QRC's budget.

Eckman asked how the \$5,000 was decided on. Nicole answered that Alberto had come up with that number based on their calculations. He has experience with the QRC budget.

Romo pointed out that this money could be used to sponsor events like Queer Con.

Eckman said that he would be comfortable giving \$7,000 instead of \$5,000 to make sure that this committee has enough money and doesn't have to come back to the Executive Board for more money.

Monkah asked if this money would come out of the Activities Fund budget. Jo said that this committee is modeled after the ESC Leadership and Advocacy Force.

Hessami asked if the process is broken and in need of improvement instead of just having QRC keep requesting money from Activities Council. Jo said that traditionally, large-scale programming has been supported by the QRC which they don't necessarily have the budget for. Approving this funding would be confirming that the AS supports large-scale queer events. Also, any queer student could utilize the fund if they have an idea for a good way to spend the money.

Hessami asked where the money would come from. Jo said it would come from reserve funding. It would be approved by the BOD that comes from the reserve account. After 2 years, it would be reevaluated by budgetary structures.

Senator-at-Large Barenburg asked how much Queer Con usually costs. Nicole answered it depends on the year and what the organizers choose to do, but usually it's around \$5,000. Barenburg said that they maybe this fund should have some wiggle room and increase the amount by a little bit.

Jo said that any unused money would go back into reserve funds and not stay in the QRC account.

**VII. Action Items - Board**

A. Made to Waste Coffee Cup Initiative

Hessami said that she looked into the logistics of putting this on the ballot and an initiative would require 5% of the student body's signatures after the Board has approved it. Thus, if they choose to do an initiative, these folks will need to collect around 750 signatures this

week. Doing a referendum instead of an initiative wouldn't require the signatures if it was presented by the Board. It would be in the form of a question in the affirmative or negative.

Monkah asked how much the discount would be. Zach answered that 25 cents is the ballpark but work will need to be done with Dining to decide the exact amount. Hessami added that Aramark has the ultimate say because they control pricing. Solomon wondered what authority this referendum would have to tell Aramark at what price to sell their products. Hessami said that it was a referendum that banned plastic water bottles on campus. It passed through the AS Board, gained the support of the student body, and with pressure and evidence of interest, Aramark agreed to stop selling water bottles on campus. Hessami said that having a referendum is a good leverage point to enter into those negotiations. If Dining says no to a priority of the student body, that could reflect poorly on them.

Monkah asked about the timeline of this project. Hessami said that after the results of the student election, this issue will be brought to Dining. They will do work to enact this on campus (hopefully before summer) so that they can re-do the menus before school starts in the fall and lessen reactivity.

Solomon asked how coffee cups were chosen as the item to target. The proposers said that they read a news article from the University of Winchester where they enacted this policy and reduced the use of disposable cups by one third. It's not just limited to coffee, its other coffee-related items as well, like tea.

Eckman said that he seems this as more conclusive than the water bottle ban, because as it stands, he can go upstairs and buy a soda upstairs since water isn't available and water would have been the healthier option. He sees this project as really getting to the heart of cutting back on waste on campus.

Monkah asked how they will measure the reduction of waste. The presenters answered that they will be working with the recycling center and other offices on campus that have the power to measure that. However, these details are not the priority at this point – right now, they are focused on getting Dining on board with the plan.

Jo stated that they completely support this idea. Having compostable cups is good but not completely sustainable, and this is a step towards Zero waste.

Hessami expressed concern about Aramark refusing to lower the prices. They might just look at this as an opportunity to add another 25 cents to the price. Jo said that the language of the referendum should explicitly state that the price will be reduced based on the price of the cup.

Solomon said that she sees this idea as a small target that could come across as performative sustainability. However, she would like to see how students feel about it by putting it out for a student vote.

*MOTION ASB-19-S-12 by Hessami*

To pass the referendum for the Made to Waste Coffee Cup Initiative with the understanding that Hessami and Lee will work with the team to decide on language for the final initiative.

*Second: Jo*

*Vote: 5-0-1*

*Action: Passed.*

*(Hessami abstains)*

B. Local Lobby Day

Kissinger reported a change that was made under “Equity and Inclusiveness” concerning the mental health drug and alcohol stabilization center.

*MOTION ASB-19-S-13 by Hessami*

To pass the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County Agenda for Local Lobby Day.

*Second: Mejia*

*Vote: 6-0-0*

*Action: Passed.*

C. ASWWU Constitution

Hessami recommended that Article 5 Section A change language to say that the Election Code cannot be changed during an active election. She also outlined several changes that were made in Structural Review Committee recently, including consolidating language around fees into one statement, changes to reflect the power of the Senate, and the rights for the Board and Senate to form their respective opinions through a resolution – neither has the power to form the official opinion of the AS.

Jo said that this was designed based off the branches of the WWU Administration structure, specifically the separation between Academic Affairs and Student services. The Senate Pro-Tempore sits on the Executive Board so that they clearly serve as a primary body of representation between both the Board and the Senate. The Senate should be having meetings with anyone within the Executive Board’s purview as they see fit and vice versa. These choices were made in order to delineate the purpose of both bodies and give direction. It’s intended to not be limiting, but directional. Jo expressed extreme gratitude for all the work put into this document.

Eckman asked if Brent Carbajal was talked to as the VP of Academic Affairs of the university.

Hessami clarified that “external government bodies” includes the city of Bellingham, Whatcom County, state of Washington; those in the purview of AS President and VP for Governmental Affairs. The Senate won’t have the capacity to plan Lobby Days, manage the Legislative Liaison, etc.

Maya (Student Senator for Huxley) said that this document could be a good place to delineate the responsibility of keeping student informed on what is going on.

Barenburg added that we can revisit the Constitution in the future. What we are crafting right now is something to last the next 2-3 years, but she wanted to note that it can always change in the future.

*MOTION ASB-19-S-14 by Jo*

Approve the ASWWU Constitution with discussed changes of adding “keeping students informed” to the preamble.

*Second: Hessami*

*Vote: 6-0-0*

*Action: Passed.*

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

### **A. Alternative Transportation Fee**

Hessami reminded everyone that her and Lee had previously made a recommendation about a 10% fee increase to the Alternative Transportation Fee. Solomon and Eckman had expressed concerns that if we increase the fee now, that would affect future negotiations with WTA and they would take advantage of the fact that we just raised the fee.

Hessami said that she met with Brian Sullivan and he had the same concern. He said that he expressed that WTA is not hurting for money at this point, and WWU routes are beneficial to them since they are so popular. It wouldn't be a good business move to do a fee increase without a justification to students as to why. The fund's reserves are not at a critical point quite yet. They talked about conducting a student survey to address concern on ridership and routes. They will negotiate increased routes and raise fees if needed at the same time as WTA negotiations in January 2020.

Jo brought up the idea of putting a referenda on the ballot about the 5% increase to keep students informed and in the loop, even if we don't have to.

## **X. Board Reports**

**Ama Monkah, VP for Activities**, stated that she has been working on the S&A Fee Committee, and they need an increase in the S&A fee or soon the fee will be \$150,000 under. They are thinking about doing a 4% increase.

**Natasha Hessami, VP for Governmental Affairs** said that she is going to Washington DC next week with Millka Solomon to lobby for Western: NSF and NIH grant funding for research, support for undocumented students, Title IX protections, and pell grant funding. They have many meetings planned with legislators.

**Nate Jo, VP for Business and Operations** stated that they will be gone next Friday as they will be in Arizona representing Swim Club. They have also been participating on the Wage Task Force and would like feedback soon.

Budget Committee is working hard and will be presenting to the Board soon. They are making recommendations to extend the OC Excursion Grant for the training of trip leaders intended to lower the barriers of access. Also, SEF may become operationalized into the Budget.

**Millka Solomon, AS President** also reported on S&A fees. She said that minimum wage increases is the biggest ask of the AS. A lot of things will be coming out of AS reserves because the S&A fee cannot support that money right now. The state law is that you cannot do an S&A fee increase of more than 4% at a time.

*Millka Solomon, AS President, adjourned this meeting at 6:10pm.*