



## Western Washington University Associated Students

### AS Board of Directors

May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019

VU 565

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

**Absent:** Nate Jo (VP for Business and Operations)

**Advisor:** Annie Byers

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

**Guests:** Cora Cole (REP), Henry Pollet (REP), Hunter Stuehm, Emily Gerhardt, Brandon Lane, Chrissy Hoefgen, Paden Koltiska (Student Senator), Alexis Goss, Eli Kiesel, Tristanne Drogege, Casey Hayden, Cindy Monger, Greg McBride, Eric Alexander

### Motions:

**ASB-19-S-25** Approval of the minutes from April 12<sup>th</sup>. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-S-26** Extend the discussion by 5 minutes. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-S-27** Extend the discussion by 5 minutes. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-S-28** To approve the 5% fee increase to the Alternative Transportation Fee. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-S-29** To confirm AS Executive Board election results. *Passed.*

**ASB-19-S-30** To approve committee appointments. *Passed.*

*Millka Solomon, AS President, called the meeting to order at 4:32pm.*

### I. Revisions to the Agenda

*MOTION ASB-19-S-25 By Solomon*

Remove "Mitika Wilbur" agenda item because they got their funding covered elsewhere.

*Second: Hessami*

*Vote: 6-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

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

Abdul-Malik Ford stated that he is looking forward to the release of statements concerning Elections Code violations by elected Board members and current Board members.

### III. Information Items

#### A. VU Budget Recommendations

Greg McBride explained the VU Budget Recommendations for the proposed FY20 Viking Union Budget.

Hessami asked if the MCC facilities will be rolled into VU facilities eventually or if it will always be separate. McBride answered that MCC falls within the purview of VU operations. Hessami also commented that she has heard discussion in UPRC meetings about putting key fobs on doors, and asked if the VU improvements will be going through central key services. McBride answered yes, to have continuity through the system. The MCC and the VU should be on the same page. Hessami also asked if Pro-staff, classified staff, and student staff is all included under Personnel. McBride answered yes. Monkah asked what the difference is between “Operationalized” and a one-time charge. McBride says that it has to do with the size and scale of the budget item. Items that are operationalized are items that we regularly purchase.

Eckman brought up the issue of gender neutral bathrooms within the budget. McBride said that implementing more gender neutral bathrooms is a priority of the VU. It is hard to do when the building is already built. Other considerations include the renovation and technical side of things, and the monetary cost of doing it. As of 2019, the MCC has 4 single-occupancy restrooms (one of which is ADA accessible because they ran out of space). Eckman suggested codifying this commitment to implementing more gender neutral bathrooms. Eric Alexander gave context that this public announcement is, in a way, a declaration of the commitment. McBride said that the VU team has been working with Langley to push for multi-occupant gender-neutral restrooms that work in the building.

*MOTION ASB-18-S-26* by Hessami  
Extend the discussion by 5 minutes.  
Second: Eckman Vote: 6-0-0 Action: *Passed*

Mejia said that the Board could add this issue in their legacy documents or create a document for the new board saying that this issue was left unfinished, and give context and strong suggestions for the implementation of more gender neutral bathrooms.

The Board decided to do an electronic vote by 8pm on Sunday.

## B. New York Times

The New York Times budget was cut last year with little consultation with students and the university. WWU has not provided a subscription to any other news source in the meantime. Nora Harren and Nicole Ballard in the REP office have been talking to students and different departments to figure out if there is interest in bringing the NYT back. There is strong support, and they decided to look at providing an electronic option.

Historically, the AS has footed the bill of the NYT subscription, but splitting the price with other departments on campus is a possibility.

A guest from the New York Times said that they have been working with student governments to provide more sustainable solutions and provide digital access to every student. It's for students, by students – but there is an option to also add in faculty and staff and provide an institution-wide membership.

Hessami inquired about the financial aspects of the subscription. NYT Representatives responded that a student-only membership that includes graduate students is \$9,500/year (less than \$1/subscriber/year.) Hessami asked about the purpose of having students sign

up individually. They responded that this is a way to verify how many students are taking advantage of the program.

The reps went on to explain that including staff access, the membership would be \$15,000/year. This price is much lower than it should be so that it could be sustainable long-term. They said that they could provide a 5-year agreement with a 2% increase in price after that time.

Hessami asked if there is a program that excludes grad students. The representatives answered that the undergrad-only program is \$7500. Hessami asked why there is such a large jump in price when we only have around 700 grad students. The rep answered that is because grad students increase usage and research.

Eckman encouraged that this matter go to the Senate. He is in favor of funding the \$9500 student package. If faculty decide that they would like NYT access, they have the option of talking to their department chairs and provosts about funding that.

Mejia asked if there is an option to give access to alumni. They answered that currently, that is not an option, but they are looking into developing a young professionals program.

Monkah asked how the student-only access will be paid for. Hessami answered that it will be funded out of AS reserves. Hessami added that Nora Harren and Eric Alexander have been talking about doing shared funding with other departments on campus.

Harren reported that departments who use it heavily, such as the libraries, would be willing to fund it. The Political Science department was only willing to contribute \$200 (even though some classes require access.) The library didn't give an exact amount that they were willing to contribute, but they said that they are willing to meet us where we are at. Harren also added that our previous package cost \$20,000, but included physical copies of the New York Times.

The NYT Reps added that faculty can jump on the package at any time if they would like.

*MOTION ASB-18-S-27* by Hessami

Extend the discussion by 5 minutes.

Second: Eckman

Vote: 5-0-0

Action: *Passed*

Lee agreed that this should be brought to the Senate. They asked Harren what she has received in terms of student feedback on this topic. Harren said that she did a survey on WIN at the beginning of the year and got about 50 responses. There have been numerous students visiting the REP Office and emailing her to ask what happened to the Times. People are worried about not being able to stay up to date on current events.

Tatum Buss, Senator-at-large, added that she was sad to see the Times go and depended on it as a news source. Ballard, Senator-at-large, added that a subscription is required for some classes, which ends up being an added expense to the student on top of tuition and books.

C. Carry-Over Policy

Cindy Monger presented the AS Carry-over policy. She reported that there is a new format to the document but no outstanding changes. This policy describes how the Operating Budget closes out at the end of the FY. Monkah asked how it is determined which accounts get closed out and which go to reserves. Monger answered that it depends on how the accounts are set up. There are self-sustaining accounts, like the Info Fair account. Solomon clarified that the distinction is that carry-over is for the accounts that generate their own revenue.

#### **IV. Action Items - Board**

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

Hessami reported that there was an advisory vote in Alternative Transportation Fee Committee to recommend a 5% increase in the fee to the Board. This fee would not need to go to a student vote, since the cutoff for that is 5%. The committee decided that if the fee is increased more than 5% and goes to the student vote, the program needs to have some substantial increased services. The program is working on sending out a survey concerning ridership, which will also serve as good leverage for WTA negotiations.

Eckman asked guest Kay McMurren how students make their route needs known to WTA. McMurren replied that any comment by any rider can be made on their website on their comment portal, and they do pay attention to what riders are saying. They occasionally have public meetings that students can attend.

*MOTION ASB-19-S-28 by Lee*

To approve the 5% fee increase to the Alternative Transportation Fee.

*Second: Hessami*

*Vote: 5-0-0*

*Action: Passed.*

#### **V. Information Items - Board**

##### **A. Student Senate Grant Funding Request**

Eckman started by saying that he doesn't want to leave the new Senate Pro-Tempore tasked with the issue of fully funding the Student Senate. Western is the only school in Washington State that pays its student senators over minimum wage. Currently, it is being funded as an unfunded mandate, which puts the S&A fee committee in an uncomfortable position. Solomon added context that this year, there were no additions to the S&A fee because minimum wage increases were so pressing.

Solomon clarified that this really is a 3-year grant, not a 2-year grant.

Mejia asked if the lump sum would be given to the Senate right now. Eckman answered yes, but only to be used for salaries. If minimum wage increases again, which it very well could, then that money is there specifically for that. Any extra funding is left in the account. Mejia further clarified how this will affect the AS reserves. Eckman answered that it will be \$110,000 coming out of reserves, which will be replenished by S&A fees in the fall.

Solomon asked if Eckman was amenable to making it a 2-year grant instead of 3. She said that she was not comfortable with securing funding out of the reserves for 3 years. The next two Senate Pro-Tempores should make securing funding their top priorities. Eckman agrees that funding will most likely be secured in the next two years, but believes it is a good idea to have a cushion just in case.

Lee said that they are in favor of securing 2-year funding and doesn't think the extra year safety blanket is entirely necessary. If needed, the Senate Pro-Tempore can always come back after 2 years and ask for another year of reserve funding.

Mejia brought up the idea of having a separate small programming budget for the Senate.

#### B. MCC Board Assistant

Mejia reminded everyone that the Multi-Cultural Center will be opening up in the Fall. In order to lessen the burnout for the VP for Diversity, she is bringing to the table the idea of having a Board Assistant. Solomon asked who this position would report to. Mejia answered Annie Byers, like all the other Board Assistants. Hessami suggested taking a look at all the Board Assistants and re-assessing the structure.

## VI. Consent Items

### A. Election Results

Alec Willis, AS Elections Coordinator, reported that voting on WIN went perfectly. It was secure and reliable, and worked remarkably well for the election process. There was a short outage in the system, but it was Microsoft-wide and didn't have anything to do with WIN itself.

Hessami added that the Student Senate will be the ones to ratify the election results in the future.

*MOTION ASB-18-S-29* by Hessami  
To confirm AS Executive Board election results.  
Second: Solomon      Vote: 5-0-0      Action: *Passed*

*MOTION ASB-18-S-30* by Lee  
To approve committee appointments.  
Second: Mejia      Vote: 5-0-0      Action: *Passed*

## VII. Board Reports

**Natasha Hessami, VP for Governmental Affairs,** reported that June 1<sup>st</sup> is Washington Student Association General Assembly. There are 14 spots and priority is given to folks who sit on Legislative Affairs Council. Hessami said to let her know if anyone else is interested in coming. She added that the new Board inauguration is Wednesday, May 29<sup>th</sup> from 4-6pm.

**Levi Eckman, VP for Academic Affairs** asked folks to come to the Student Senate meeting on Tuesday night as they review budget items. He also encouraged everyone to attend Faculty Senate at 4pm in OM 340 on Monday night. They will be having a discussion concerning racial slurs in the classroom. It could be a close vote, and when students are in the room, they tend to make more critical choices.

**Millka Solomon, AS President** reported that Sabah has not done anything for the Students of Color forum planning. When Solomon and Lee talked to him last quarter about doing a forum, he had offered to take on the labor of planning it. Solomon said that this points to a pattern of administration waiting for students to put in the work to pursue things.

**Camilla Mejia, VP for Diversity** reported that she is working on the MCC Soft Opening. Langley had mentioned that they are planning something for LGBTQ+ students at graduation (maybe rainbow cords). She also reported that the Low Rider show is on Sunday.

**Anne Lee, VP for Student Life** reported that they have followed up with Leonard Jones about some RA concerns and Housing seems to be taking things seriously. They will be passing this on to Emily Gerhardt to pursue next year. They also reported that the WWU Pride celebration is June 4<sup>th</sup>. They would like LGBTQ+ students to participate in the pride flag-raising.

***Millka Solomon, AS President, adjourned this meeting at 6:28pm.***