

Western Washington University
AS Food and Housing Insecurity Advisory Committee

February 5th, 2020

VU 462 A

Board Members: *Present:* Trever Mullins (VP for Sustainability), Kayl Gillihan (SAIRC Outreach and Representative Coordinator), Patrick Czichas (AS Student Senator), Soumya Ayelasomayajula (ESC Representative Proxy), Ethan Chrisope (Off-Campus Living Representative), Amber C (Feeding Western Coordinator), Karen Deysher (SAIRC Coordinator), Lorrie Bortuzzo (Multicultural Services), Alyssa Tsukada (Office of Sustainability Representative), and Christian Urcia (Supervising Resident Director).

Secretary: Sierra Templeton

Guest(s): Eun-Hee Seo (The Planet), Simranjit Dhaliwal (The Planet), and Cole Sandhofer (KUGS Public Affairs Producer).

Motions:

HIA-20-W- N/A

I. Call to Order

Trever Mullins, AS VP of Sustainability, called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

II. Additions and Changes to the Agenda

N/A

III. Approval of Minutes

N/A

IV. Discussion Items

A. Work Plan

1. Bortuzzo handed out documents explaining where the work plan came from to give some background information. The plan is fluid and doesn't exactly outline what will occur. The first internal advisory committee will come together soon to provide support for students experiencing homelessness on campus. She noted that there was a recent article stating that the driving force of homelessness is high rent, and she will send out the source of this information. She stated that the first step would be to assess the services that Western has on campus currently, and how the grant can best help them, rather than to jump straight into the website which

would centralize and connect all of these resources, since doing this may increase usage of resources and they may not have the support needed if this were to occur.

2. Mullins asked the meeting attendees what the shortcomings in their funding are currently and how they would use this grant funding if possible.
 - a. Urcia asked whether Western has to apply and demonstrate need for the funding and Bortuzzo responded that in December Western was asked to apply to the grant and developed the work plan and budget to submit. The grant was given to Western, but the work plan and budget are still flexible.
 - b. Deysher stated that WHOLE currently has no specific coordinator position, and instead is being managed by two SAIRC employees. She applied to get funding through the AS but isn't sure if this will go through, and if so it will likely only be a one-year grant. They need someone in a position like this to run food drives and keep the pantry in stock, as well as communicate with other pantries but currently are unable to do so. How WHOLE is organized and how it will grow depends on how much the proposed central structure changes the pantries.
 - i. Mullins asked whether WHOLE has the money to maintain food in the pantries. Deysher responded that currently they're using a grant that expires in 2022 to fund and would have to reapply in the future. The pantry also provides living essentials so they would need to figure out how to get donations in a more strategic way.
 - c. C stated that running Feeding Western, as she is an Americorps Vista employee is difficult because she isn't sure what she is and isn't allowed to do. Funding this position through Western would alleviate this issue and give more freedom. She also said that more resources whether it be manpower or money would be helpful to the program.
 - i. Urcia noted that after next year, the program may or may not exist. C elaborated, saying that as Vidana is leaving the OS, Feeding Western may move to the AS to be more helpful to students.
 - ii. Mullins stated that what is needed is a shift in academia and higher education to focus on student's basic needs rather than solely their academic needs. Starting off with cheap healthy meals on campus, and easily accessible emergency housing.
 - iii. Urcia noted that without policy and only the passion of individuals is hard to make leeway.
 - d. Urcia stated that the Birnham Wood pantry was pretty healthy during the Fall Quarter, and that all the meals donated by students at the end of Fall Quarter could be allocated up to \$2,000 per quarter in food donated to the pantries by Aramark. In the fall, \$1,500 was donated to Birnham Wood, and the next step would be to get some of this food distributed to other pantries on campus.
 - e. C stated that with Swipe Out Hunger, there aren't enough people to work on it, and outside of her ability to respond to emails, other duties such as running swipe drives, posting fliers, and tabling are out of her capacity. She suggested maybe a club of students who would want to get involved.
 - i. Tsukada stated that there are reps that want to get involved, so maybe three people who could help out here. Bortuzzo added that Dr. Nicholas Zaferatos has a class focusing on addressing homelessness on campus and that they've taken some projects from committees and done focus groups, maybe students from the class could work on this as well.

- ii. Urcia commented that Swipe Out Hunger is challenged by the fact that so many students are on the interest list at the beginning of the quarter and most donations don't come until the very end of the quarter while there's barely any time to redeem the swipes.
 - iii. Chrisope stated that adding a marker on the GET app that would let students donate meals with some sort of counter to show how many meals a student would have left may be an incentive to donate.
 - iv. Cole asked whether Aramark is making money off of the donated meals that aren't able to be distributed, and Urcia responded that Aramark is making less money because of the program, but that all the unused meals do make Aramark money. They did however donate 250 meals at the beginning of the quarter this quarter.
 - v. C asked if the contract with Aramark isn't renewed, what will happen to Swipe Out Hunger? Gillihan responded that Shred the Contract wants to make the dining services more sustainable and locally based and Mullins added that they are to assess this process in the summer with projected figures.
3. Bortuzzo noted that this work plan grant is only a 2-year pilot project and after it's over the Universities report their findings and they look at creating legislation to provide the resources that universities need.
 - a. Mullins asked what would happen if the legislators don't approve the grant for more time. Deysher responded that in the case of California, they allocated funding from partnerships they had built while they had state grants and funds. It's important currently to create a culture in which resources for food and housing insecurity are built into the community knowledge.
4. Gillihan asked whether there's a way to show students that there's a work plan to let them know what's being done on campus about the issues of food and housing insecurity.
 - a. Bortuzzo stated that it is publically available, and Mullins elaborated that if there were to be a statement made by Melynda Huskey about the work plan, the HIA could ask for a survey to be added to it in order to get student input in the process, if Bortuzzo could reach out to Huskey to do this.
 - b. Deysher noted that there's definitely available support on campus, pro-staff and classified staff have expressed interest.
5. Deysher noted that the first step would be to review what programs other universities are using to compare and show administration what exists and what is possible to accomplish with the funds and time constraints we have, and she will have more research on this for the next meeting.
6. Mullins invited anyone else to contact himself or Templeton concerning any research or information they would like to share at the next meeting.

V. Other Business

A. N/A

Trever Mullins, AS VP of Sustainability, adjourned this meeting at 2:02 p.m.