



## Western Washington University Associated Students

### AS Executive Board Meeting

[March 6, 2020]

**Board Members:** Adah Barenburg (Senate Pro-Tempore), , Grace Drechsel (Vice President for Governmental Affairs), Emily Gerhardt (Vice President for Student Services), Trever Mullins (Vice President for Sustainability), and Selome Zerai (Vice President for Activities)

**Advisor:** Annie Byers (AS Board Program Coordinator), Leti Romo (Program Advisor)

**Secretary:** Jude Ahmed

**Guest(s):** Nora Harren, Ina LaGrandeur, Leonard Jones,

#### Motions:

**ASB-20-S-1** Motion to approve the election code for an executive board election code for 2020. **Passed.**

**Grace Drechsel, AS VP for Governmental Affairs, called the meeting to order at 4:26pm.**

#### I. Approval of Minutes

A. Gerhardt motions to approve the minutes from February 28, 2020 Executive Board meeting.

Barenburg seconds motion to approve the minutes from the February 28, 2020 Executive Board meeting.

**Motion passes 5-0-0.**

#### II. Revisions to the Agenda

A. Mullins wanted to add to "Other Business" to talk about the COVID- 19 situation and the reactions students have had and what the university is doing as well as voicing other concerns.

Drechsel called for a call to motion to add COVID discussions to the "Other Business" category.

Mullins motions to add corona virus discussion to other business for 20 minutes.

Barenburg seconds motion to add corona virus discussion to other business.

**Motion passes 5-0-0.**

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

#### V. Action Items – Guests

LaGrandeur and Harren explained the use of endorsements and recently added a section regarding social media use for endorsements. AS employees cannot make an endorsement on behalf of the AS. The endorsement has to say it is the individual and not in their AS capacity to create separation when making the endorsement. In the definition section, it was added what it means to be an individual in reference to this code because can be challenging to make that conclusion as well as guidelines when employees are wearing any type of apparel like stickers and buttons which can also be seen as endorsements. AS employees cannot wear these when acting in the official capacity as in their AS role/ during office hours.

Zerai asked if AS clubs have raised their own club funds, why are they limited to how it is spent. LaGrandeur and Harren answered that candidates need to be paying for their own campaigns. A club can endorse a candidate, but they cannot spend money on that candidate or their campaign.

Drechsel pointed out how the election code isn't the most appropriate place to keep individuals accountable because it doesn't have teeth for grievance proceedings. Drechsel asked about the increased specificity of the endorsement? LaGrandeur and Harren answered when regarding AS employees, they cannot make endorsements as AS employees and when regarding the AS Executive Board, if a board member chose to make an endorsement there would need to be a statement of some kind specifying the endorsement is not made in the capacity as an AS employee but rather as an individual.

Barenburg asked how that would be enforced?

Zerai mentioned the possibility of paying a fine.

Drechsel mentioned she did not feel that paying a fine was the most equitable because losing any amount of money affects people differently.

Gerhardt mentioned having a fee attached to politics feels unethical because if you must pay to participate there may be an issue.

Harren agreed that it is hard to enforce in any of their capacities.

Drechsel mentioned there needs to be a way to endorse without it infringing on first amendment rights.

Zerai mentioned feeling a board member endorsing someone feels unethical because the power they hold in their position.

Barenburg mentioned writing something that could outline this process with keeping people accountable.

Drechsel talked of how to create a climate where it is unethical to endorse a friend and to create an understanding that it is legal but unethical.

Gerhardt mentioned the possibility of the board releasing some sort of statement where they recognize the election is coming up and whomever doesn't want to publicly endorse someone can say that they have no intentions of publicly endorsing someone because of how unethical it can be in these elections.

Gerhardt mentioned endorsements possibly being a personal decision rather than a group decision, if someone did not want to endorse someone and this way there is no violation of one's first amendment rights.

Zerai mentioned if that is something to happen it should be sent out to all students on campus and those on the board who want to sign can and those who don't do not have to.

Zerai mentioned wanting to continue this discussion in other business.

Mullins motions to approve the election code for executive board election code for 2020.

Drechsel seconds the motion to approve the election code for an executive board election code for 2020.

Motion passes 5-0-0.

#### **IV. Information Items – Guests**

The housing and dining system structure is a self-sustaining enterprise of WWU and is responsible for the housing system, dining component and facility and operations of Viking union. This was created by the board of trustees. This presentation was focused on the rate increase concerning the residential students. The protocol is summarized as the number of inputs going into the package and the asking of a 4% rate increase on residence hall students. Within the dining contract between WWU and Aramark, there is a minimum 3.5% increase for food and labor. Another influence is occupancy. The bulk of revenue comes from fall admissions and the budget predicts a reduction of freshman from last year. This creates a temporary short-term reduction in freshman from the previous year. Another influence is the new residence hall which will be an accessible facility and will allow the ridgeway area to be accessible with additions of elevators and rampways. The 4% increase would include operating expenditures like labor expenses, supplies, materials etc. and daily operating expenses (day to day) as well as non- operating expenses (1-2 big projects per year) like major renovations. The big component is the new residence halls and the planning to create a long-term master plan for all housing facilities in the next 20 years. This plan will guide which buildings get renovated, torn down, added, when and how much that will cost etc. The first phase is the construction of the new residence hall and the addition of extra “attention” that may be needed in other residence halls. This plan will be presented to the board of trustees in April.

Drechsel had some confusion regarding the prediction of enrollment increasing when she has been hearing the opposite which Leonard answered the difficulty of those predictions and with their predictions coming from the office of admissions.

Drechsel asked if there was anything taken into account in terms of un partnering with Aramark when the contract expires in 2021 and was answered with, nothing in the budget is directly pertinent to the contract operation and the biggest shift would not be the contract operation rather the self-operation because personnel would increase as well as the cost of purchasing food.

Mullins asked about the line items related to budget that don't directly relate to operating expenses and they represent the charge to dining services that they charge WWU and Aramark expenses are on their books.

Gerhardt asked about the residential supervisory groups and their involvement.

There are two components. One is subcommittee of RA chain and the other is the RA chain as a whole. There are several input groups around campus like dessert with directors etc.

Jones has had meetings with hall council presidents as well.

Mullins asked if the 4% increase was discussed with these student advocacy groups.

Jones answered that they were not because those specific groups are more input based on day to day operations and the conversations regarding this 4% increase have been much more recent.

Gerhardt mentioned the way its phrased is the advisory groups recommended the 4% increase and that needs to be more specific. Gerhardt asked about the ICAs, and if this upcoming year will be another pilot program and was answered that it will not. She asked what was found this year with the ICAs.

Jones answered that because this year is the first year of the program and will be continued to the next year with different titles as well as improvements being made based off input from the pilot program including balancing program, education and supports for historically marginalized students at a predominantly white institution.

A.

**MOTION ASB-20-S-1**

By: Mullins

Motion to approve the election code for an executive board election code for 2020.

**Passed.**

Second: Drechsel

Vote: 5-0-0

Yes : 5

No : 0

Abstaining : 0

VI. **Personnel Items** *(subject to immediate action)*

VII. **Action Items – Board**

VIII. **Information Items – Board**

IX. **Consent Items** *(subject to immediate action)*

X. **Board Reports**

**Trever Mullings, VP for Sustainability** Mullins was gone most of the week at Western Oregon Higher Education Sustainability Conference. Mullins mentioned higher education sustainability is a slow process and they were hoping for something more intersectional but not as much as they had hoped and was not made for undergraduate students. It was interesting to see the different projects on other campuses. They had trainings that Mullins was looking into. Two meetings got cancelled because of incident commands around corona virus. Met with Brian Burton on the future of sustainability.

**Grace Drechsel, VP for Governmental Affairs** The legislative session is ending next Thursday. Undocumented loan programs passed and is now in the stages of developing that program. A bill surrounding Universities withholding transcripts due to fees for any fees will be illegal in the next 90 days and a title IX bill passed as well. A student support package which included funding for CASAS, Veterans Center, and mental health services are not in the next budget as well as ethnic studies revisor. Some conversations involved supporting student activity during election season and how to protect marginalized students from harm without infringing on

free speech. The Washington student association board of directors meeting was cancelled due to corona virus.

**Adah Barenburg- Senate Pro- Tempore** Barenburg went to the supporting student activity during election season meeting. Barenburg has a meeting with senators about the credit hour policy. As of now faculty senate is not cancelling but may be meeting over zoom. UPRC was cancelled, UPRC next week will discuss ethnic studies proposal.

**Selome Zerai- VP for Activities** Zerai said this week had a lot of talk consisting of club activities and election season. Activities council meetings have been cancelled due to corona virus. Conversations surrounding free speech in relation to clubs and how to support marginalized students. Talks regarding the chalk on red square. Talks about Ramadan with MSA trying to host a Banquet. Activities council is not able to support them and Zerai is assisting MSA in trying to go through departments as well as other options to secure funding.

**Emily Gerhardt- VP for Student Services** Gerhardt mentioned that political clubs will be more involved as the political climate gets more intense. There was a meeting with YDSA and University Police regarding the incident. Not much was resolved. Gerhardt is considering doing an event regarding politics in this climate and how to navigate and be productive in those conversations. Meetings were also moved around. Had a meeting with Melynda regarding the dining contract and what will happen going forward.

## **XI. Other Business**

The board discussed the effects on students because of corona virus with finals being online as well as winter commencement being cancelled. There is worry for food access for students on campus and how Aramark will respond to this.

Gerhardt is meeting with Leonard and Vicky next week regarding students in Residence Halls and the dependence on dining services.

Barenburg questioned what will happen to student employees.

Gerhardt mentioned that with moving everything online it assumes that every student has internet access and a way to get online and if they have the technology for that.

Mullins and Barenburg talked to make a more official recommendation to staff and admin as to what students would like to see and to raise the concerns of students.

Drechsel sees it as an access issue on who can and cannot come to campus.

Gerhardt wonders if there will be any financial compensation if spring quarter is completely remote as well as the weeks that were missed during Winter quarter.

Mullins and Barenburg mentioned the worry of the absence of student representation surrounding the conversations on coronavirus.

Gerhardt mentions students wanting more transparency on what the administration is anticipating on what is going to happen and how this will impact finals and spring quarter etc. The consensus is that it is hard for the administration to make final decisions without knowing more but that student participation may be important in these conversations especially when regarding monetary means.

***Grace Drechsel, AS VP for Governmental Affairs, adjourned this meeting at 4:11pm.***