



## Western Washington University Associated Students

### AS Board of Directors

May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020

MS Teams

**Board Members:** *Present:* Lani Defiesta (President), Selome Zerai (VP for Activities), Yesugen Battsengel (VP for Diversity), Grace Drechsel (VP for Governmental Affairs), Emily Gerhardt (VP for Student Services), Trever Mullins (VP for Sustainability, and Adah Barenburg (Senate Pro-Tempore)

*Absent: None*

**Advisor:** Leti Romo (Assistant Director for Student Representation & Governance)  
Annie Byers (AS Board Program Coordinator)

**Secretary:** Sierra Templeton

**Guest(s):** Nate Jo, Sargun Handa, Hunter Stuehm, Michael Protska.

### Motions:

**ASB-20-W-19** To approve the minutes from the date of May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020. *Passed.*

*Lani Defiesta, AS President, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.*

### I. Approval of Minutes

A. May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020

*MOTION ASB-20-W-19 By Battsengel*  
To approve the minutes from the date of May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

*Second: Zerai*

*Vote: 6-0-1*

*Action: Passed*

*Yes:*

*No:*

*Abstaining: Barenburg*

### II. Revisions to the Agenda

None

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

1. Stuehm noted that the new AS email signature tool is available and has been sent out to all AS student employees. He urged employees to look over and use the tool.

### IV. Information Items - Guests

A. AS Fiscal Year 2021 Budget- Defiesta

1. Jo presented the budget presentation, stating that the budget can be thought of in five different areas: AS Activities, AS Central Services, AS Representation, AS Resources, and AS Subsidies. The budget is 1.1% smaller than the previous year with the S&A fee being reduced as well to accommodate for student needs in the

time of COVID-19. If the AS spends what's budgeted with a 5% decrease in enrollment, there will be a \$190,000 deficit, if there was a 10% decrease, the discrepancy would be \$330,000. It's vital to look at what the AS needs to do before the end of the year to plan accordingly for running on a deficit like this. Jo stated that it has always been precedent in the past to pass a budget for the following year, so they'd rather have a framework for the next years employees, especially considering the senate is not elected until the end of Fall quarter.

2. Defiesta asked if the business director is able to work with the AS this summer to work on this.
3. Romo stated that the director will be hired and able to engage, and whatever the board comes up with would be a recommendation for next year's finance committee. She stated that the committee was put together this year and because of the quick changes, flexibility needs to be allowed.
4. Jo stated that they'd like multiple options to be proposed, one for each scenario of enrollment (no change, 5% decrease, and 10% decrease). Regardless of what Fall expenses are cut due to operation decrease, something must be to accommodate.
5. Zerai asked if the activities at the beginning of the year are cut, would this make up for at least some of what the AS budget would lose? Would it cover the 5% decrease?
6. Jo stated that it may make up some of it, but likely not all. The ESC conference is projected at \$20,000 and each late night is \$10,000 which still doesn't cover the cost. They will follow up to see if there are more decreases based off of Inslee's guidelines. The fee level should not be increased even to accommodate mandatory increase in wages, such as happening in the athletics department.
7. Mullins sided with the inclination of not wanting to increase the fee and asked since this is something to look at for the newly elected board, if they should be invited to next week's meeting.
8. Defiesta responded that if possible, they should use some of their internship time to plan for this.
9. Zerai stated that she is skeptical of throwing the new board into all the information about the budget as she found it hard to comprehend when first joining the finance council.
10. Romo stated that every student has access to the budget, so this seems okay and since the new board has not started in their positions, they cannot meet quorum.
11. Handa responded to Zerai stating that she believed with sufficient explanation, like that Jo has provided, they should be caught up to speed.
12. Mullins stated that it is important to make sure student leaders are present in the discussion of values that are being bounced around in the moment, and not necessarily acting in their role.
13. Drechsel stated that she agrees with Zerai's statement but with Jo's explanation it should be digestable.
14. Battsengel stated that they agree with Zerai but as the budget is being reviewed it's good to thoroughly understand.
15. Jo stated that the AS should think critically about what students value most about the AS and what could be put on hold until a normal budget.

B. STC Resolution- Gerhardt

1. Protska stated that Shred the Contract is a club organized to combat issues with Aramark and big dining contracts. Their concerns include ties to prisons, environmental hazards, and business contracts and their effects on student employees. They are in favor of bringing a self-operated (self-op) dining system where the university takes over. About 30% of all universities are self-op, including

the University of Washington and Washington State University. Western is nearing the end of their decade long contract with Aramark. Melynda Huskey was supposed to make a recommendation to Sabah Randhawa a month ago concerning this, but because of COVID-19 this hasn't happened. This resolution is an effort to show admin student interest in self-op dining, and the endorsement of the Student Senate and the Executive Board would assist this.

2. Defiesta asked what the senate decided concerning this.
3. responded that there were a lot of questions about the logistics of self-op dining both financially and how it would affect admin employees and unionization.
4. Handa stated that it looks like it would originally cost more, but eventually would make up the cost.
5. Zerai asked why pro-staff are excluded from contract renewal.
6. stated that this pertains to upper-management particularly and have been excluded because Aramark has paid and hired these people and have had disagreements with STC over the style of dining system and vision for the future. He added that STC has not gotten a lot of information on the timeline of the contract and the factors of the decision-making process.
7. Garhardt added that she met with Huskey on Tuesday where they talked about dining, and Huskey expressed concern for the financial side of this.
8. Mullins noted that maybe language that includes what Aramark employees have done on campus for basic needs and separating from Aramark as a company on a larger scale. How will the new system support the future of basic needs?
9. Protska responded that there is definitely for transparency and accountability for Aramark existing on Western's campus. STC is in contact with other schools who have made the transition, and he can't see it being difficult to keep these benefits of the current system moving into a self-op system as long as admin are notified.
10. Gerhardt commented that Mullins and herself discussed having a pilot program for self-op services on campus, perhaps using a café, to prove that this can be successful.
11. Protska responded that the idea if taking a shorter contract and moving to self-op over time is looking feasible at the moment, but in the case of a smaller location, he has territorial dispute concerns, although it's still something to look into.
12. Gerhardt asked if any universities have gone from self-op to a big dining contract. It might strengthen their argument to know what pitfalls will be brought up.
13. responded that he is biased, but it seems that the trend in the past five years has been to move to self-op dining. He will look into this switch more.
14. Zerai asked what the ideal option for STC is, taking the pandemic into account.
15. Protska stated that ideally the system would transition after the contract has ended but currently, they are looking at a slower transition. They are waiting to see what happens with the pandemic.
16. Defiesta recognized the work STC has done, but to separate the specific employee management work versus Aramark as a company. She spoke for the board to say that Western should have a self-op dining system because of the systematic racism and oppression that Aramark has shown. She asked what the board can do to pass this on to the next year.

**V. Action Items - Guests**

A. None

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

A. None

**VII. Action Items - Board**

A. None

**VIII. Information Items - Board**

A. None

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

A. None

**X. Board Reports**

**Lani Defiesta, AS President** stated that she is working with Barenburg to livestream a chat room with Sabah and Melynda so that students are able to engage with them. It will be held May 28<sup>th</sup>. She had a meeting with Stephanie Bowers about student engagement and leadership, discussing charging four or five foundation board members to create a committee with the AS VP of Sustainability and the AS VP of Student Services as well as student senators for increased communication. She had a meeting with financial aid looking at how the CARES money can be used to help undocumented students. She has small group meetings May 19<sup>th</sup> with the senate, and the “State of the AS” is coming up on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. She has a meeting with Hunter and Annie and Leti Romo about the AS VP inauguration.

**Selome Zerai, VP for Activities** stated that the last activities council meeting will be held on June 1<sup>st</sup>, and the new VP will be leading it. They have been reviewing applications for on-campus publications.

**Yesugen Battsengel, VP for Diversity** stated that they had a meeting with the ESC to approve the Bootstraps Project Resolution and will have a meeting with the Undocumented Student Committee concerning a letter they are planning to send out. They have been tweaking their legacy document due to unsureness due to the pandemic. It looks like either WWU or Washington state is suing the Trump administration for not including undocumented students in the CARE act which hopefully will go through. They will be meeting to discuss how to best support students in the event of online negativity caused by the upcoming political election.

**Grace Drechsel, VP for Governmental Affairs** stated that the LAC is meeting on an as-needed basis with subcommittees meeting as well. They passed funding for the Director of Legislative Affairs housing and wages for the anticipated special legislative session this summer. They decided not to charge the student legislative fee for the summer. She is on the hiring committee to fill a position for the WSA.

**Emily Gerhardt, VP for Student Services** stated that she has been doing work with Shred the Contract and will set up a meeting with Michael and Trever. She has been in a group with Trever and Leti talking about a proposed new food pantry in Woodring compared to

the ones that already exist on campus. Also had a chat with Melynda about the future of dining on campus.

**Trever Mullins, VP for Sustainability** stated that he has been looking at feedback with SEJF, and they approved a grant for the basic needs working group for \$24,000 which will increase later once legalities are straightened out. Nora Harren, the next VP will start training on Friday, and he is waiting to talk to Stephanie Bowers about the foundation.

**Adah Barenburg, Senate Pro-Tempore** stated that she is not able to talk at the moment.

**XI. Senate Reports**

1. Handa stated that they have been talking about the STC resolution and also looked over the budget for the upcoming year. They have more smaller meetings next week to go over the budget as well.

**XII. Other Business**

- A. None

*Lani Defiesta, AS President, adjourned this meeting at 7:03 p.m.*