



AS Finance Council

May 11, 2020

4:00 p.m.

Teams Online Meeting

Members: Present: Nate Jo, Chair (AS Business Director), Nicole Ballard (Student Senator), Corey Griffis (student at-large), Sargun Handa (AS Student Senate delegate), Keenan Kaemingk (Activities Rep), Christina Ngo (Resources Rep), Rachel Walsh (Central Services Rep),
Absent: Lani Defiesta (AS President), Selome Zerai (VP for Activities)

Advisors: Leti Romo, Assistant Director for Representation & Governance; Raquel Vigil, Business Manager

Secretary: Cindy Monger, Dean of Students Unit Fiscal Specialist

Guests: Alicia Prokopenko, AS Club Finance Assistant Director, Jenn Cook, AS Clubs Manager

MOTIONS

FC-20-S-10 Approval of the minutes of May 4, 2020. *Passed*

Nate Jo, chair, called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of the Minutes

MOTION FC-20-S-10 by Walsh

Approval of the minutes of May 4, 2020.

Second: Griffis Vote: 4 - 0 - 1 Action: Passed

III. Revisions to the Agenda

VI. Public Forum

V. Information Items

A. FY21 Budget: Lost Revenue Scenarios

The AS presented to the Services & Activity Fee Committee (S & A). Initially they requested only the revenue approved for FY'21. They then realized that other areas had put forward their full request. The reason AS went with the same request as last year was to say that they didn't want to increase the fee at all. The other areas submitted their full request to have that in the records for percentage allocation. Vigil moved forward with submitting the FY21 full budgeted amount as approved by the council \$3,175,483. This is not to say that they will receive the full amount or that they would increase the fee to meet this request. It is simply in line with what other areas had put forth. Vigil was very frustrated with that meeting. Jo and Defiesta represent the AS at the meeting. Knowing all of the work the AS went through to decrease the budgets, it may have ended up that it appeared the AS requires a lower percentage. The AS went through and made real cuts. Other areas didn't appear to and one area even requested an increase of over \$100,000 (understanding that they may not get that amount). Jo said that they could have submitted the original request which is more in line with what other areas did, but that they went with the full amount recommended by the council which was a \$41,000 increase from last year. The AS has a value of being fiscally mindful during this time and advocating for no increased fees, even if everything returns to normal next year. They have told S & A how much they need for next year.

What they will be doing now is to approve a budget that will be used to provide guidelines for how money will actually be spent by the AS next year. Jo will be presenting this budget with the 5% and 10% budget reductions to the Senate and AS Exec Board. By the end of the year those two groups and AS Finance Council should come up with a recommendation. Jo said that it will be difficult to have the conversation about how they could get to those numbers. Jo thinks they could approve three different scenarios to help for next year with the budget. Jo has included in the spreadsheet an artificial scenario of what budget reductions might look like. At a five percent decrease in enrollment, there would be about a \$190,000 deficit and at a ten percent decrease there would be about a \$340,000 deficit.

A straight across the budget reduction, might not make sense for some areas because there are some that are mostly personnel. Vigil feels that it might be difficult to do a 5%/10% decrease across the board cuts because of needs in different areas. She doesn't have advice on which way the council should go. There could be cost savings in some areas if they aren't on campus for fall based on what Covid is doing. Jo is struggling with how best to do this given the unknowns. Jo feels that they should at least have a conversation about this when they don't even know what next year will look like. They think that at least having a conversation about it might be helpful in terms of setting next year's council up for success with some guidance.

Vigil said if they can't do large event in fall quarter there may be savings in the ESC Conference or Late Night, this would not be cutting these areas, but savings due to unspent money that could help to cover the shortfall. Vigil feels that they might get into some issues because people may think they could spend more in the winter and spring. She thinks they may need to say that the funds unspent due to Covid-19 need to be unspent and benefit the whole AS. Romo said that there are people here in the summer and the student voice isn't going to be lost in this and there should be some trust to look at what is best for students. Romo does think that there will be some things that might just not happen. Scenarios are hard when so much is unknown.

Ballard was wondering what it would look like if they area online again for fall, would the two-week trainings be cut back more, is there some savings in that opportunity. Walsh has been passionate about making training purposeful and less hours. She would like to make it one week of online training. However, Walsh will be graduating this year after three years in the office and will not be in charge of the training. Ballard wondered if the total hours would be used, currently each employee is allotted 30 hours. Jo said that looking at areas where they could reduce for things that might not happen. Jo suggested moving forward with Budget Authorities to see what the savings might be for events that will not happen. Vigil said for example if cannot have the VU Late Night event then they would use that \$5,000 savings to offset the deficit from any reduction in enrollment. This would be a repurposing of funds to help cover the deficit. At 5% there is \$190,000 deficit, but with the savings from \$5,000 then it would only be a \$185,000 deficit. It would decrease the overall shortage. Vigil said they are trying to create the best package possible for all programs in the AS. She thinks that they should not have areas trying to hold on to funding or spend them because they are afraid if they don't spend it, they won't be able to get it back in the next budget. Jo would like to make this process as inclusive and cooperative as possible. Griffis thinks they could frame this as there are programming restrictions that can free up an opportunity to lessen the fiscal constraint of reduced revenue and allow for more regular programming in the spring.

B. ESC Conference Grant Proposal

Some of these were decision packages that have now changed to AS Grant proposals after Jo announced that they would not be able to increase their budget in the next year. These have all been seen before either as a decision package or grant proposal. This is just a refresher before they would vote. This proposal is to increase the conference from one to two nights. It would be approved contingent on the conference happening.

C. Executive Board Travel Grant Proposal

Romo said there are a lot of opportunities for the AS Executive Board to travel and understand things that are happening nationally. This way they can better represent students. Romo said that they will not travel until after the ban, which now happens through October 2020. Jo said that previously the Student Development Fund had not allowed the AS Executive Board to use those funds. That policy has been suspended and they are working on moving funding for this into the AS Reserves Distribution. Jo doesn't want the AS Executive Board to have more opportunities than other leaders. Vigil said if there is a strong statement that the new AS Reserves Policy will be including Student Senators and Executive Board Members, then this proposal could be retired. Walsh thinks they could create something to allow for access to this in the policy. The Employee Development Fund \$3,000 budget was removed from the operating budget, to be included in AS Reserves. Romo said that there are certain VPs that have access to conferences and then some that do not have it built in as a stable source of funding. Ballard thinks that the Employee Development Fund doesn't have enough money in it. Jo said that the usage in the last 5 years have varied greatly. Last year only \$1,000 was used. This year the whole \$5,000 was used in the Fall. Jo is proposing increasing that to \$10,000, and they could make it more than that if needed. Jo thinks that times are also tight right now and travel is an extra. Handa said that there should be a fund for all the elected officials including Senators. Cook said that some conferences are still happening online and are a reduced cost because there are not travel or hotel associated with them. She also feels there are good conferences in the fall and winter that people may be able to attend. Jo said that having this fund as a permanent part of the AS Reserves means that it gets filled if there are residual dollars, but if there is no funding available then it wouldn't take away from operating needs. Vigil said that because there are newly elected officials on this council, she thinks that having a professional development account in combination with AS Employees where there is a competitive application for funds is a good idea. This would help remove potential bias in passing these funds. Jo said that they coincidentally have quorum of the new AS Exec Board on this council now and should be aware of this. Romo wanted to make it clear that no Student Senator has requested travel and therefore this proposal is based on where the current requests. The Exec Board has requested travel and she is trying to address this need. There are a few things that also play into it with Student Senators and part of this is the hours that they are allotted and when elections happen for them. This is only the second year of the Student Senate and so they are still figuring this out.

D. Office of Civic Engagement Programming Proposal

Total fiscal impact is \$1,000 this is to address the restructure of the Legal Information Center and the new focus on increasing Civic Engagement efforts. In the past the focus was on Voter Registration and Get out the Vote efforts, but there are more opportunities that they would like to focus on given the additional staff. Vigil asked if this is an appropriate ask from the Legislative Action Fund given that this is an important election year. Romo said that the Legislative Affairs Council (LAC) votes on this funding and she can't anticipate how they will vote on it. Ballard feels like things in OCE will happen very quickly and the turnaround for funds in LAC is dependent on meeting times.

E. Western Hub Of Living Essentials (WHOLE) Coordinator Grant Proposal

Vigil said that there is a potential for this to be funded through the Foundation Grant and she is concerned if this is appropriate given the Killian Report and WAC. She's not trying to oppose these grants, just find the most appropriate way to fund them and maximizing funding for student fees. She supports all of these proposals. She just doesn't know if this is appropriate given the report. It says only minimal operational support of Food Pantry. There was a generous donation and there is currently \$30,000 in the Foundation and there is \$10,000 worth of

donations for the Food Pantry. She's hearing there aren't enough staffing hours currently. She wonders if they could hire a work study student to do this. It's too early for her to determine if they could use the S & A Funds for this reason. Romo partial subsidization of a student food bank operation is allowed, provided it benefits only to students. The Foundation money is the only way they have been able to provide other food funding such as gift cards for students and the pop-up pantries in this time of Covid-19 VU Building closure. It has not been decided if the WHOLE will stay within the AS. Currently this has been added to positions without allocating more hours for the position holders. Ngo said that this year they were unable to hire a work study position. Ngo has easily spent 5 hours per week working on this and that cuts into her other duties. Walsh agrees, they've always been hard to hire work study students due to when students are notified of their award (and especially non-work-study awarded students tend to apply and are unaware they do not qualify). Jo said their interpretation is that they can support WHOLE, because they are also able to provide things like sexual health supplies without it being an issue. Romo said that this started two and a half years ago. What they imagined when they started this is not what they imagine now. There is really a need for food security, and she would like to put more effort here.

F. Board Assistant Grant Proposal

Jo had a meeting with the AS Board Program Coordinator a while ago about this. Last year they did a restructure and the assistants went from being assigned to specific committees to be assistants in general assigned to committees or Exec Board or Senators. Romo said that this position would be solely for the AS Student Senate, for minutes, phone calls, etc. It is very different in that it is focused on this one area. Jo thinks it would be great to have an assistant dedicated to this area.

VII. Other Business

VIII. Adjourn

The Meeting was adjourned at 5:12 p.m.