



AS Finance Council

May 4, 2022 11:30 a.m. Teams Online

Members: Present: Noemi Bueno, Chair (AS Business Director), Glory Basic, Vice Chair (AS President), Ben Crandall (Activities Rep), Madi Gilbert (delegate for Central Services Rep), Naira Gonzales Aranda (ASVP for Diversity), River Johnson (Student Senate Representative), Silvia Leija (Resources Rep- SAIRC), Daniela Reyes (delegate for AS Student Senate President) *Late:* Chelsea Joefield (Resources Rep- ESC)

Advisor: Raquel Vigil, Assistant Director for Business Services and Planning

Secretary: Samantha Hughes, Viking Union Organization Business Services Program Support; Cindy Monger, VU Administrative Specialist

Guests: Susanna Schronen, VU Fiscal Tech

MOTIONS

FC-22-S-06 Approve the minutes of April 27, 2022 with stated amendments. **Passed**

Noemi Bueno, chair, called the meeting to order at 11:34 a.m.

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of the Minutes- Basic said that the sentence, “Other council members had no objections” under Information item A paragraph seven should be taken out as to not imply that a stance was taken by council members that did not respond, and that they were still thinking.

MOTION FC-21-S-06 by Basic

Approve the minutes of April 27, 2022 with stated amendments.

Second: Johnson Vote: 6-0-1 Action: Passed

III. Revisions to the Agenda- Basic had concerns about approving budgets without knowing the overall AS impact. She asked if we approve a budget and then find out that reductions could be made later on, can we go back and make those changes? Vigil said it would have to get on the agenda for re-review and approval. But it may be problematic to pass budgets and then pull back that approval to then change or reduce the budget. After further discussion, it was decided that the action items for this week would be tabled to next week by acclamation in order to have more accurate overall numbers and continue the discussion on budgets.

IV. Public Forum- Basic shared that the OCE and people from the student government have been tabling because the deadline for filing for student government is this Thursday.

Joefield joined the meeting.

Johnson said there was a recent proposal brought up to explore the idea of creating a union for student workers, and they wondered what the council thought about it, or if the council had any ideas. Joefield asked if it would be university-wide or AS-wide. Johnson said the original idea was more focused on Aramark, but then the discussion expanded from there. Right now, it is seeming like it would be Aramark, then move to AS-wide, then potentially move to be university-wide if they are successful. Currently they are unsure of all the details. Johnson wondered if this union would potentially impact the budget, if its more prudent for the AS, or if because of student representation in the AS that it is not as needed. Vigil said that when we say “union” in terms of the student union or the student union board, that is a separate union and conversation than forming a union to protect

students in an employee setting. Vigil said she does not know enough about the formation of unions and employee protection to give input. If any AS employees have concerns that is a result of their employment, their first line of interaction would be with the AS Personnel Director. Depending on the outcome of that, it would move up through the organization as appropriate. Bueno said she can see how a union would be needed for certain student workers on our campus. She does not know how the AS plays into this particularly, but she sees how the AS can be a voice of support for this work if students want to be a part of it. Ben Crandall said he was “all in for unionized AS”. Joefield said that the thing about grievances for student employees is that there has to be a clear understanding or separation between a student grievance and an employee grievance, because student grievances go through Student Life, employee grievances go through the AS Personnel Director, and if it is a mixture of both it goes through both. Vigil said she agrees, and if a student does not know what role they’re in in this context and feel most comfortable talking to the AS Personnel Director, the AS Personnel Director could field the concern and then as the advisor to that position, it may go to Vigil and she would help talk through if they believe it is a student or employee grievance. Bueno thinks that the AS generally pays well, and that some positions on campus pay less. Vigil believes that there are some positions that students are aware of or may have been hired into, especially around DEI work in the library, where the salary for those position(s) are higher than the current AS scale. Vigil thinks that the current AS scale is healthy and there are probably lots of organizations and institutions that pay less than the AS, and there are probably some at the same level, and there may be some that pay higher. Joefield said there are spots in the library that aren’t DEI that don’t start [at] the same [level of pay], but they offer different opportunities for wage growth which ends up being higher than the AS in the long run. Vigil said “Love your input...Love Wage Growth! Especially for employees who are committed to staying and contributing within the AS overtime. Right now, the AS has been focused on the increases due to minimum wage...and really no focus on potential of wage growth!”. Joefield said “Yes I think wage growth is actually important, it helps with staff retention and recognizes the responsibilities attached to student positions”. Bueno said that this highlights a need for more student voices in regards to student employees. She looks forward to seeing what happens with the union for student workers.

Crandall asked Vigil for clarification on last meeting’s discussion where Vigil said the AS would expect the same level of programming from offices even if reductions were made. Crandall wondered how that would work, or how they would move into more DEI work if they had budget reductions. Vigil said budgets are a management tool, and are not real cash. For example, let’s say the publicity center asked for a \$50,000 allocation and that has been approved for several year. But if in the current year the council becomes critical of that allocation, and based on revenue and the services they provide, the council realizes they only need \$45,000. If we were to then reduce the budget to \$45,000, there is still enough money there for them to provide the same level of programming. People are not being asked to cut programming or services. Additionally, there are going to be times when this council looks at, for example, the Outdoor Center, and there’s a huge increase in the ask. If this committee reduces the Outdoor Center ask, we wouldn’t be able to expect the same level of programming because the programming is changing [increasing] with the ask. So the question really becomes, can we trim the OC budget and still say that we want them to do what they say they will do in their proposal? Vigil is unsure at this time. Crandall asked that when thinking about budgets as a whole as we are moving into spaces where students are demanding more access, space, or funding for these things, how can we

support students who want to grow and change their programs and not be constrained by the budgeting and the financing? Crandall thinks that that money shouldn't be a reason that we deny something to students that would serve and benefit them. Vigil said that this is the beauty of what the Finance Council does. She considers this council as repurposing funds when needed to meet the desire and benefit of the WWU student population. When it comes to the conversation about reductions to the student senate budget, a 10% reduction is an estimate, but we believe that we are going to get the full benefit of the senate. The Senate would not be asked to reduce hours worked. The full budget has not been spent in the past few years. By reducing, they could take that money from the 10% reduction and repurpose it to the OC to make trips low cost or no cost, as that would benefit more students. Busic said that Bueno is going the Executive Board meeting tomorrow, so people can share concerns then too. When she brought up the reductions to Brenner Barclay (AS Student Senate President), the concern was that then offices would be set up for failure and they would not be able to perform at their full capacity. Vigil said the AS has set up a healthy reserve, of which \$300,000 is allocated for Operating Reserves. This serves as a safety net so that if an office exceeded the budgeted amount following reductions, the AS Operating Reserve would take cover that overage up to the amount for hours of work allocated by position. Reyes said that instead of just viewing it as setting them up for failure, they should look into why senators aren't given the opportunity to or aren't using all their hours. This may be a push to look into that further and give the Student Senate the work they need. Joefield said "I think the response should also be that we are encouraging offices to fully operate and succeed. We would support that, but it has to be shown that they will utilize all or the majority of what is being provided".

V. Black Student Demand Updates

VI. Information Items

- A. Services and Activities Fee Update- It was decided by the voting members of the S&A Fee Committee to approve the S&A fee to the maximum allowable amount of 4%. ASWWU is expected to receive 3.25% of that effective fee increase. Based on that increase and an increase in expected enrollment, the expected revenue will be \$3,084,497 and \$180,000 for summer. It now seems that the initial budget deficit discussed last meeting is a lot less than expected. The AS is concerned that the headcount used in the revenue predictions may not be accurate as it is an increase almost to pre-COVID-19 pandemic numbers. There are also extra considerations that need to be made, including that the S&A fee amount varies if you are a full-time or half-time student, and the fact that the AS does not collect revenue from satellite schools. Because of this uncertainty, Bueno recommends that we still move forward with the budget deficit in mind.
- B. FY'23 AS Budget Updates- There were conversations about the adjustment to the reduction to the LACE budget, and Karen Deysher, Coordinator for Student Advocacy & Identity Resource Center, was in agreement with the reduction to the FXXWHL budget, they will use their foundation account. The FXXVU budget was also discussed with Eric Alexander (Executive Director for Student Engagement and Director of the VU) and it was decided that they will use the VU organizational discretionary fund for travel expenses, and therefore take the reduction that Alexander proposed. Vigil recommended that for WHOLE, that it is not listed as a one-time reduction but rather a reduction. A one-time reduction implies that things are getting better for the AS, but they really aren't. Vigil

reminded everyone that at this point, nothing has been officially reduced or readjusted by the council. Everything has been suggested/requested by the council and has Budget Authority agreement. Bueno said that with those reductions in mind, the budget is currently at \$3,294,976. With the anticipated S&A Fee, we are currently overbudgeted by \$30,479. Bueno asked how the council feels about this, also keeping in mind that the projected enrollment may still be high. Vigil thinks that given this is an aggressive estimation of the number of enrolled students, she thinks we should try to balance the budget as much as possible. She thinks it will be really hard to actualize that projection of 3.84 million for the S&A Fee, and does not think WWU will meet pre-pandemic enrollment levels. Johnson said it could happen, but it is not a good idea to assume that. Bueno asked what enrollment numbers the previous year's S&A Fee was based on. Vigil said she can't answer that, but that in the fall of 2021, there were 12,774 full time students and 1,550 part-time students. In winter quarter those numbers dropped to 11,492 full-time students and an increase in part-time students to 1,840. For spring quarter there was a drop to 10,553 full-time students and an increase in part time students to 1,971. Pre-pandemic in the fall of 2019, there were 13,943 full-time students and 1,266 part time. Winter quarter full-time enrollment still stayed at 13,000 and there were 1,300 part-time. If ASWWU anticipated enrollment of 14,000 for next year, they could be more hopeful about meeting that increase.

Busic left the meeting

In light of this and other considerations, Bueno thinks the council should be cautious with the budget. She will provide clearer numbers after further discussion with the S&A Fee Committee. Bueno asked if everyone still agreed with the one-time reduction of 10% to the Student Senate and AS Executive Board. Vigil said, "As the projections look good we could go down to a 5% reduction". Gilbert thinks a 5% reduction would be favorable over the 10% reduction. Johnson said, "I still advocate for 10%". Reyes agrees with Johnson about the 10% reduction, but is worried about the fact that she is Barclay's delegate, and that he seems to not favor the 10% reduction, so she feels she could go with the lesser 5% reduction. Vigil said that while Reyes is not a proxy for Barclay, it is wise to think about what he would want for the Student Senate. Johnson said based on the interest in elections, there will be continued problems with having all positions filled next year, so they think that while optically a 5% reduction is better, a 10% reduction would also be fine. Reyes agrees that there will likely not be a full Student Senate staff.

Vigil said "I would advise we look at the cut to the ESC Club Fund of \$5,000. I might advise we reinstate the \$5,000 as the overall cut to the AS is not as drastic as had been proposed". Vigil would also like to look at the Outdoor Center increase.

VII. Action Items

VIII. Other Business

- A. Prep work for the next meeting

IX. Adjourn

- X. *The Meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.***