



Western Washington University Associated Students Legislative Affairs Council Meeting Minutes

May 16, 2022, 4:30 PM

Attendees:

Committee Members: Eli Stanciu, Anna Corinne Huffman, Breaker Chittenden, Zach Cohen, Grace Alkema, Marlowe Larson, Teagan Hudson, Shrija Gandhi

Guests:

Staff and Assistants: Delfine DeFrank, Jennifer Black

Motions:

Eli Stanciu, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:32 PM

I. CONSENT ITEMS

a. Approval of the Minutes

Motion by Teagan Hudson

To Approve April 18, 2022, April 25, 2022, & May 2, 2022, Minutes

Second: Grace Alkema

Motion passed 6-0-0

II. REVISIONS TO THE AGENDA

a. None

III. INFORMATION ITEMS

a. Eli Stanciu – FY23 AS Student Governance and Representation

Delfine DeFrank – Breaker can you please go to FXXLAF tab. For context for folks, this is the current AS VP for Governmental Affairs, formerly Ankur's budget. A lot of Eli's budgets is Western Lobby Day as well as Western Intersectional Lobby Day, if there is left over budget. I believe last year there was a cut to the budget in terms for funding for WILD. As you can see there is general supplies for printing, the largest part of this budget comes from paying for reservations as well as hotels and transportation. What has been proposed because of the foreseen projected deficits with the AS SNA fee, it was brought up by Raquel as well as the finance council, to potentially cut this budget from student government from the exec board, and just have the FXLACF, which is

what this council uses when funds are approved. All students from the Bellingham and extension campuses pay \$1.00 each quarter into the legislative action fund. The proposal is that this budget gets temporarily cut and for future lobbying efforts, because there is so much money that hasn't been used in the last couple of years, FCLACF funds for the next year or two until we reach a point where we don't foresee any deficit. Any Questions?

Breaker Chittenden – What is being suggested is we eliminate this for the next year and use the extra that we have in the LAC fund so that we can use this money to fix the deficit that we have right now?

Delfine DeFrank – Yes, because the current projection of \$200,000 that the AS is expected to be in a deficit. A lot of budgets are in a deficit right now, and that is kind of how all budgets work, is to have an expected deficit. There is a lot of money in reserves, and other funds, and grants that can be applied, but alleviate that concern when bringing it up to Exec Board as well as Senate is to cut this cost which is around 16K, and I proposed 18k for next year, 2023. Hoping to cut costs where we can, is this budget. This will alleviate that for us and sharing the projection and approving it when it comes to student government.

Breaker Chittenden – We would still be able to get this back in a couple of years?

Delfine DeFrank – Yes, this is a temporary cut. I think this to help figure out the trends, especially because we are in a pandemic year. There is 80-90k in the FXLACF budget I think the financial fund manager for the AS and Raquel who is a budget authority, were comparing and brought it to our attention that there were so many fees that have not been utilized. That could be used for the next year to off balance this when we consider the SNA fees. What they are asking us is to do a temporary cut until we get a more stable data to see what the projection would be for the next couple of years, depending on whether we continue to do hybrid or if we continue to be in person.

Breaker Chittenden – Thank you

Delfine DeFrank – Any other questions?

Teagan Hudson – Does that mean that whoever is AS VP next year would need to request funding for whatever they do, that would normally come out of that budget?

Delfine DeFrank – Yes, and there is technically an out of session process written in the charge and charter for when LAC is not in session to request the funds. It is within that charge and charter the AS VP for gov as well as the dola with consultation from the

advisor and the financial funds manager will approve whatever, which is what happened over the summer with fall general assembly. That is an example of the VP for gov doesn't have to get it approved because the committee isn't in session. If the committee is in session for example, the VP for gov would to come to committee and say this is the projected cost for western lobby day and it would need to be voted on.

Teagan Hudson – Thank you

Delfine DeFrank – No problem, is there any other questions? I can also share with you what the LXLACF currently has, which should be similar to what I shared with you last month.

Eli Stanciu – My understanding of this, is then my position would then have to go to this council to get approval of funds. I think A. that one benefit of that, is that the AS had a problem with people accusing it of using funds to go on needless trips, and needles expenses a few years ago. If there is a process where it goes through a group of students and there is a vote on it, it could help alleviate those problems, as well as help the problem. Even though I am the one in this position in that regard I see the benefits of this proposed plan. I do also understand the inefficiency, but am I understanding that is how it would work with the proposed plan

Delfine DeFrank - That is a fair assumption with that proposed plan, it could be seen as more democratic as well as giving more flexibility when this committee isn't in session. I think cutting it would allow for that perception from the public even though all of our state dollars have to get approved, and I have to follow a policy as budget authority.

Eli Stanciu – My second point, the Washington Student Association is talking about increasing the of their fee. I feel that it would be beneficial if we could move the money around so that we aren't spending as much just from my position to do legislative efforts is also beneficial. We aren't losing legislative opportunities by this budget change if anything it is providing more opportunities. WSA does a lot of legislative efforts for Western and for a lot of schools.

Delfine DeFrank – I don't have any comments or thoughts, but I just shared in the chat that currently, the FXLACF as of April 30, 2022, has \$86,784.21. In terms of that potential fee increasing have fun at WSA and let me know how that goes. We can strategies for your successors in spring quarter what that ballot measure will look like for the implementation of the year. Any other final questions?

IV. ACTION ITEMS

a. None

X. OTHER BUSINESS

a. Anna Corinne Huffman – We have been working on the admin town hall event, which is getting a bit of rework, because admin do not want to show up, it is going to be a little bit different. The event will be on May 26th and May 27th. May 26th will be a workshop in academic west, and we are hoping student groups will come and attend. We are hoping a few admin may attend, and we can talk to them about how to navigate admin structures, and we've invited many student groups like shred the contract, honor students of color, and many other groups we are waiting to hear back from different student groups. The intention is to have a space for people to have some information sharing and letter writing to admin. On May 27th, we will still be doing the drop-in meetings with admin. Anyone who wants to meet with admin they can. We are trying to get people to sign up in advance. Any questions about this event?

Breaker Chittenden – Dental Dams are finally on their way and should be here this week.

Eli Stanciu – It would be great if we can get a general idea of how the committee feels about this budget idea. I have to discuss this with the council this week before I can bring it up as an action item. Are there any strong feelings or leaning a certain way about how you would feel about the budget plan.

Teagan Hudson – No objections

Zach Cohen – If I could just get some clarification. Is the 86,000 number that Delphin put in the chat what is in the budget right now and we wouldn't add the 15,000 going beyond, we would just suspend that?

Anna Corinne Huffman – The 86,000 is what is in the LAC budget right now. That is the budget we oversee. The VP for Govs budget receives around 16,000 each year, and so that funding would be dissolved, and we would use LAC money to pay for Western Lobby Day, Local Lobby Day, and things like that. LAC funding would take on those responsibilities. The money in the VP for gov's would be dissolved.

Zach Cohen – That makes more sense, I am in full support of that.

Anna Corinne Huffman – I am more supportive of it, but I am concerned with the WSA fee increase potentially happening, and in two years from now student leaders may not know that is something that is supposed to come back. How can we make it really clear to our incoming position holders that, that money is supposed to come back

and that is something that people should be aware of? That is my two reservations but in general I am in support of that.

Breaker Chittenden – I would like to concur with Anna Corinne. I do have my concerns and that is why I asked Delfine if this is just a temporary thing. I am assuming the budget must be passed by the executive board, and I don't know if it is possible, we can make a statement stating, making it very clear that we intend to have this redistributed back to this position after a period of time.

Eli Stanciu – I believe it can pass with a deadline. For example, it could say in two years the funds must be returned or must go back up for a vote before the Exec Board with bringing it back or not. We can make a timeline to make sure that it doesn't go away forever. I understand the concerns, and I wouldn't just want the money to go away, but I think as a temporary it makes sense. It would be good if we don't have too much deficit problem, but it is important not to lose the money that the students want to use for student interests. Would it be ok if I reflect the leaning opinion is we are alright with the idea, but we have some demands? Next week I will bring it up as an action item and solidify those and you can think about that. Exec board isn't voting on this, this week, but we do need to plan to vote on this. Any other questions or comments?

Eli Stanciu, Committee Chair, adjourned the meeting at 4:59 PM