



**Western Washington University Associated Students
Sustainability Equity & Justice Fund Meeting Minutes**

February 7, 2022, 5:00 PM

Attendees:

Committee Members: Laura Wagner, Rosa Edwards, Jose Ortuzar, Rhama Iqbal, Roman Vieira, Zinta Lucans, Johanthan Riopelle, Anna Phippen, Charles Barnhart

Guests: Glory Basic

Staff and Assistants: Delfine DeFrank, Jennifer Black

Motions:

Laura Wagner, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:03 PM

I. CONSENT ITEMS

- a. None currently

II. REVISIONS TO THE AGENDA

- a. Removal of approval of minutes from this meeting due to needing some work to be done still. **Zinta Lucans**

III. INFORMATION ITEMS – GUESTS

- a. Not enough voting members available for quorum-**Johnathan Riopelle**
- b. Climate Leadership Certificate was approved by the Vice President due to the inability of this committee to get together and vote on it. **Johnathan Riopelle**
- c. This committee can expect to see the final application next week
- d. Reach out to Alexis and see if she has a proxy prepared for when she is unavailable to get to the meeting. **Laura Wagner**
- e. We have further applications coming up and this committee not being able to meet continues to be a problem and we need to look at other processes for this committee. **Johnathan Riopelle**
- f. Voting Process **Zinta Lucans & Johnathan Riopelle**
 - a. What does it mean to vote in different circumstance?
 - i. 3 main tiers
 - 1. Small Grants: Up to \$5,000, approved by the SEJF Manager and Director of Sustainability

2. Medium Grants: Up to \$35,000, approved by the SEJF Committee.
 - a. Split up into two meetings. The first meeting is a discussion meeting to look at the material and discuss it. The second meeting is where the committee will vote to approve the funding.
3. Large Grants: Over \$35,000, require the submission of an abstract prior to application submission, both approved by the SEJF Committee
 - a. First, we ask for an abstract, and if the committee approves the abstract, then
 - b. We vote to say whether that abstract is valuable. This means that we have reviewed it as a committee, and it aligns with the mission of the SEJF. The funds are then put aside until we receive the full application and is not accessible by any other abstract brought forward until the committee votes either yes or no on the full application.
- g. Any discrepancies amongst the websites should be brought forward to Johnathan Riopelle and Zinta Lucans.
- h. Mobile Field Station Housing in Methow Valley – Abstract
 - a. **Laura Wagner** – Appreciated the open long term funding plan. In the abstract they used the wording “Place Based Learning” a couple of different times and accurately described a couple of aspects of that concept, but what I am wondering is indigenous people have always used place-based learning and are still a part of it. How will this group ensure that indigenous voices are consistently involved?
 - b. **Johnathan Riopelle** – If this is approved Zinta Lucans or me will bring back this question to the group so that they can consider how that is incorporated and expressing in the final application.
 - c. **Laura Wagner** – Other comment, I look forward to hopefully seeing more about ecological impacts or other kind of predicted community impacts for these tiny homes or mobile homes, specifically during and past the two-year mark. It would be nice to see that they are thinking about those kinds of things.
 - d. **Jose Ortuzar** – Will this housing be available to students throughout the three quarters while students are in school, would it be a rented-out

situation, or would it go to someone else during the times that it is not being used by the Methow Valley internship or fellowship? Also, do you think that they will use sustainable technologies or try to make it low energy, inexpensive, have things in place for heating. The SEJF has funded a zenith before, which a zero net energy tiny house. Is that connected to all of this?

- e. **Zinta Lucans** – We don't have the direct answers right now, but we will bring it back to this team if the abstract is approved. We would let the team know that this committee will be looking for those things in the full application and hopefully they address that there. I do know the team was looking at sustainable technologies and was starting to consider specifically referencing the project Zenith tiny home. So, I know it is on their radar. They are looking at low impact, net zero construction as much as possible. Additionally, they are looking to see if other departments or clubs can make use of this housing, they're looking at potentially having them rented out to students, staff, or faculty on the off times. The housing would be used $\frac{3}{4}$ of the year and close for winter quarter when it's most cold and most snowy. The team was looking at using the housing year-round but that would mean they would need to include more heating or insulation for the wintertime. That might not be valuable because it's only used for $\frac{1}{4}$ of the year. These are on their radar and would be able to read about in the full application.
- f. **Johnathan Riopelle** – The Methow Valley climate would really limit accessibility over the winter, which is a significant concern for this team. To address the Zenith question, a \$72,000 grant was approved by this committee in 2017-2018, they were looking to find additional funding with the hope of eventually completing the project.
- g. **Charles Barnhart** – I am familiar with the people spearheading the zenith project. They're doing great work and it was really an amazing idea and project. It was held up by some red tape on campus and then derailed by the pandemic. Hopefully, it will be resurrected.
- h. **Rhama Iqbal** – Will there be more details about permanent housing in the full proposal?
- i. **Zinta Lucans** – Yes, if you look at this budget this is essentially only asking for enough money to pay for two of the homes. The total amount that they're looking for is closer to a dozen homes. They are looking for permanent funding elsewhere. They are hoping to start with 2-3 homes

now. Current budget is estimated at \$150,000 over two years. That is \$75,00 each fiscal year. This will be further elaborated on in the application.

- j. **Johnathan Riopelle** – There is an alumnus that is willing to match funds the SEJF approves so they can build more than two homes to start. The SEJF is not the sole source. If approved the committee will be able to ask the team directly for information. Additionally, this is all the information we have at this time and if the committee votes yes on this abstract next week, then we can get more information.

IV. Discussion Items

- a. Look at changing the wording in our charge and charter from 2/3 majority to simple majority, which means more than 50%, making it easier to meet quorum.

Laura Wagner

- i. **Rhama Iqbal** – I feel like this is a small amount of people within the whole group, which is slightly concerning, but just based on availability it would be convenient at this point. Would this carry over into future committees?
- ii. **Laura Wagner** – If the language is changed it would just say simple majority unless a future chair of the committee wanted to change it back, or if I wanted to change it back in the future when stuff gets figured out. We do have Exec Board this Friday, I don't believe Delfine that we would need to vote in here to approve a change that is up to pretty much exec board, but it would be nice to have a conversation about it. Is that right Delfine?
- iii. **Delfine DeFrank** – That is correct, yes. So, all, any changes to charge and charters need to only be approved by the exec board.
- iv. **Rhama Iqbal** – Based on present circumstances, I'm up for it.
- v. **Roman Vieira** – I feel there needs to be more discussion on this and perhaps more proxies become more common instead. I do think that will be more efficient, but we should discuss more.
- vi. **Johnathan Riopelle** – Is there an AS committee standard? If not, why not? What would it mean to establish a standard that the AS uses for Quorum so that there is consistency and transparency?
- vii. **Laura Wagner** – Delfine added in the chat government wise, like large governments that have committees which includes student government tends to be simple majority language. It can also be 2/3 majority at the

beginning of the year with the hopes in mind that the very serious committee regarding financial matters. Especially, Large sums of money would be nice to have as many people there as possible thus establishing the 2/3 majority language instead of simple majority. As it turns out, availability and getting people all in one place and communications specifically reminding people about proxies and trying to encourage people to get proxies has been difficult, that is why I am bringing this up now. Hypothetically, language could be changed if the exec board sees it as pertinent by this Friday, so Monday we could act and not have to worry about a full eight people being there even though that would be ideal. The ESC is struggling with employment at this time and getting positions filled. I will reach out and see if this is still an issue.

- viii. **Charlie Barnhart** – I think that far greater decisions have been made with fewer people. I think that if people are showing up and feel passionate and they're thinking good thoughts, they should be allowed to vote. I think their vote should count more than a proxy. Secondly, what we are voting on is all good stuff, it is allowing good things to happen, or holding that money for future good things to happen. We aren't going to do any harm I think we should be able to vote with a simple majority.
- ix. **Rosa Edwards** – At first I shared some of the concerns that this is a serious committee that deals with large amounts of student money, so obviously having more voting members present would be good, but at this point if it's not going to be possible to do that consistently then we won't be able to approve anything and it becomes an issue of efficiency and I think that is a very important thing to hold ourselves accountable for.
- x. **Laura Wagner** – The reason I brought this up was because I was on the fence. Given the original intentions of the 2/3 majority, like other people brought up, there is an issue with efficiency and meeting quorum and then votes getting delayed because they're not meeting quorum. So, keeping all that in mind, how to move forward? I depend on other members of the committee's opinions because it is my job to facilitate as chair and make sure things are going smoothly. I want to make sure that I get as many possible different opinions as possible and with that luckily Glory our AS president is here.

- xi. **Glory Busic** – I do think that it would be preferable to have 2/3, but I think in this case practicality of voting a simple majority is better because obviously being able to vote is better than not getting anything done. So, I would say as simple majority, and going off the comment too about how proxies like don't matter as much as people, that are voting member wanted. For example, if I we were voting today, I would vote for what Jasmine wanted, not what I wanted. I do think that simple majority is a good idea in this case.
- xii. **Jose Ortuzar** – I agree with a lot of those sentiments that were shared. I think 2/3 would be ideal, but a simple majority is kind of like the most practical way to get things done. I am comfortable with it being a simple majority. Especially if you know these meetings are going to keep getting delayed because people can't make them.
- xiii. **Laura Wagner** – I am going to ask for a revision to the SEJF Charge and Charter requesting the language from 2/3 majority be changed to simple majority, and in the future if it is easier to get the 2/3 majority, then have the language changed back. This is so that we can focus on efficiency right now and people being able to vote. If you are adamantly opposed to this decision, please reach out to me.
- k. **Laura Wagner** – We have a vote coming up for SEJF language basically approving the language supporting the tax on students within tuition as well as conditions for that tax. I am also chair as alternative transportation fee committee, which also needs to have a vote coming up this spring election. Basically, what that would look like is we would come up with some language for that vote, make sure that it gets in, in time to be on spring election ballots for students and the spring elections should be happening mid to late May. Exec board has yet to approve of the days for that. For at large positions, where should students that are interested go for information reached out to me or Delfine to redirect them to WIN. Just wanted to put it on people's radar that down the line we have a referendum to think about for this upcoming spring election.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Next Meeting is February 14, 2022, at 5:00 PM
 - a. No meeting the following week due to holiday.
 - i. March 7, 2022 will be the following meeting.

Laura Wagner, Committee Chair, adjourned the meeting at 5:45 PM