



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

November 15, 2022, 4:00 PM

Attendees:

Committee Members: Seb Genge (ASVP for Sustainability), Zinta Lucans (Sustainability, Equity, & Justice Fund Coordinator), Lindsey MacDonald (Sustainability Engagement Institute Associate Director), Anna Phippen (Sustainability, Equity, & Justice Ambassador), Natalie Harris (Environmental Justice Programming Coordinator), Ted Tarricone (At Large Student), Amanda Cambre (Campus Utility Manager).

Staff and Assistants: Casey Hayden (Assistant Director for Student Activities), Lily Van Mullem (Student Governance Assistant Secretary).

Seb Genge, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM

I. CONSENT ITEMS

II. REVISIONS TO THE AGENDA

III. PUBLIC FORUM

IV. INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. **Genge & Lucans – Getting to Know Each Other Activity** 10 minutes
 - a. Lucans asked committee members what project they would propose to SEJF. Tarricone would fund a mobile energy grid for tiny homes, like the homes built by the Methow Housing Trust in Methow Valley, WA. MacDonald would fund an initiative to make bicycling more accessible and joyful by putting tow ropes and bells along Billy Frank Jr. Street. She would also fund interactive art installations about sustainability. Tarricone noted that the solar windows installed at the Western Gallery on July 29, 2022, could be utilized in art installations around campus. MacDonald would also grow food across campus. Harris agreed with MacDonald, saying that the University could grow its own produce from the tops of buildings. Lucans would replace electric lawn mowing with goats. Lucans believed the goats could be utilized as an educational tool as well- Professor Gigi

Berardi makes cheese out of goats' milk. Van Mullem agreed with Lucans. Genge would transition to a Self-Operated Dining System, transition away from the natural gas steam plant, and re-think the University's investment to make meaningful change. Phippen would fund an equitable dance program. Cambre would revise the schedule of facility operation on campus to waste less energy when spaces are unoccupied. Cambre would also force faculty to optimize their space use, meaning that buildings would not be run for one-off courses. Cambre voiced support for more solar energy on campus.

- b. **Genge & Lucans** – Addressing Questions from 11/1/22 Meeting 42 minutes
- a. Lucans addressed a typical starting balance for SEJf at the beginning of a school year and why SEJF started the 2022 school year with \$544,577.02. Lucans stated that the amount of money in the fund in 2022 is a median amount of money compared to past years. There has been more money and less money in the fund at the beginning of the school year. Seven years ago, it was common for a million dollars to be carried over into the next year, which could happen for a variety of reasons, including that not enough projects proposals were submitted. Increased outreach was proven to lower the balance of the fund. The least amount of money the SEJF has held at the beginning of a school year was between \$300,000 and \$400,000. The number does not get lower than that because money must be kept in the fund as money for large projects that are approved late in the year. If only \$100,000 were left in the fund, large projects approved early in the year would have to wait until the money increased again for their project to go into action, which is not equitable. MacDonald added that it was not intentional for the fund to have half a million dollars in it at the beginning of the 2023 school year. Proposals were not turned down to keep the funds at a certain amount. Outreach would be slowed if a lot of project proposals were coming in, but no student was turned away, unless the student was looking for a larger amount of money than SEJF could provide. Lucans would be transparent with students asking for money SEJF could not provide.
 - b. Genge addressed spending excess funding on sustainable investments or carbon offsets. Genge stated that student's money could be lost on poor investments, which goes against the mission of SEJF. Genge clarified that he no longer supports investing excess funding. Instead, Genge stated that excess funding could be donated to community organizations, like the Green Direct Partnership. Genge asked the committee if excess funding should be put towards a goal, or if the money should be reserved for grants.
 - c. Tarricone asked how many projects had been passed in the years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, and what percentage of the fund was used from the start of the school year to the end of the school year. Lucans responded that Tarricone's question can be addressed in the November 29th, 2022, meeting.

- d. Genge asked if there was a need to increase funding to the Green Direct Partnership and if the needs of the Green Direct Partnership were being met. Every year, \$50,000 is allocated to the Green Direct program.
 - i. Cambre responded that the cost for the Green Direct Partnership is \$250,000-300,000 based on consumption. Western Washington University pays the difference after SEJF pays \$50,000 of the bill. Cambre would rather fund reductions in energy consumption, to pay less to Puget Sound Engineering.
- e. Lucans addressed the cost of printing in the 2023 proposed budget. Printing costs account for promotional materials. In the last three years, \$1,400 was spent on printing. \$3,000 is the max proposed budget for printing expenses.
 - i. Hayden responded that a good budget matches closely with what has been spent in the past. The E171 budget code is the AS publicity center printing services in the Viking Union. Budget code E172 represents copying and printing. Hayden asked if the budget required a line item for E171?
- f. Tarricone asked if there was interplay, in terms of projects and funding, between SEJF and the Transportation Advisory Committee.
 - i. Genge responded that the Transportation Advisory Committee was interested in bringing “Love to Ride,” a platform that encouraged biking by gamifying cycling and creating community, to campus, but SEJF money would be spent on grants as they were approved by the SEJF committee.
- g. Tarricone proposed targeting specific groups on campus with tailored marketing, such as exemplifying arts related projects in promotional materials around the Arts Department.
 - i. Lucans said there were 10 active proposals that had not reached the SEJF committee for approval yet. The SEI (Sustainability Engagement Institute) and SEJF were at bandwidth supporting these 10 unfinished proposals. To mitigate the lack of projects for the SEJF committee to vote on, outreach should be tweaked to focus on smaller, quicker projects, creating a healthy balance of big, medium, and small projects and a more regular stream of projects for the committee to review.
 - ii. Tarricone asked how bandwidth could be increased to allow more projects to be processed through the committee.
- h. Lucans addressed the wage difference between Sustainability, Equity, and Justice Ambassador wages and AS wages. SEJAs were paid \$15.95/hour, less than some AS jobs. Lucans stated that the WWU wage calculator determined SEJA wages, SEI and SEJF did not choose the SEJA wages. To understand what a livable wage was in 2022, Lucans referenced the MIT Living Wage Calculator, which used zip code and family size to determine living wage. SEI was entertaining hiring

another SEJA for Winter and Spring Quarters. A wage increase could happen with a vote by the SEJF committee, though the hiring process was the responsibility of SEI program staff. Lucans reminded the committee that each quarter there should be a report to the committee on expenses and remaining money.

- i. Hayden spoke on the partnership between the SEJF committee and SEI. SEI does not need permission from the SEJF committee to change the SEJA wage, but the SEJF committee does get to vote on the SEJF budget each year. Open and transparent communication between SEI and SEJF is critical.

V. ACTION ITEMS

VI. REPORTS

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. MacDonald implored committee members to do outreach within their individual networks. Lucans stated that campus-wide outreach will ramp up again in January for the Winter quarter.
- b. Next meeting November 29, 2022, at 4:00 PM in VU 460

Seb Genge, Committee Chair, adjourned the meeting at 5:01 PM