

**Western Washington University Associated Students
Legislative Affairs Council
Thursday, October 9, 2014 VU 567**

Present: Sarah Kohout (ASVP for Governmental Affairs), Heather Heffelmire (Legislative Liaison), Kendra Thomas (Local Liaison), James Mayther, Katie Savinski, Neil Christenson, Cody Simrell, Belina Seare, Mayra Guizar (Western Votes! rep), Sam Goldblatt

Absent: Elizabeth Pebley

Advisor: Lisa Rosenberg, Assistant Director for Student Activities

Secretary: Lily Jaquith, Board Assistant for Representation Committees

Guest:

MOTIONS

LAC-14-F-3 Approve the minutes from October 2, 2014

LAC-14-F-4 Approve the extra hours for the board assistant for Viking lobby day

Sarah Kohout, Chair of Legislative Affairs Council, called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. Additions and Changes to the Agenda

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION LAC-14-F -3 by Savinski

Approve the minutes from 10/2/14

Second: Christenson Vote: 9-0-1 Action: Approved

IV. Public Forum

V. REPORTS

A. VP for Governmental Affairs

Sarah Kohout, VP of Governmental Affairs, said the position for Viking Lobby Day Board Assistant just opened. It is available on the AS employment page. Hopefully the person in the position will be involved with the LAC. She's working with USSA to create a proposal for membership prices. Some voter registration numbers are in, the deadline was last Monday. The unofficial number is 2,700.

B. Legislative Liaison

Heather Heffelmire, legislative liaison, said she is working on organizing the lobby training to be held in November to train people for lobby day. She's reaching out to other students to get a collaborative group going.

C. Local Liaison

She went to the Sehome neighborhood board meeting. They told them they're going to start doing welcome packets for new tenants, including renter rights information. Hopefully they get more neighborhoods to do that. She will be at a public hearing for rental safety on October 27.

There are 20 people signed up to go. She spoke to the city attorney to get clarification on the ordinance that is moving toward public hearing. It includes a lot more than originally thought. The registration system includes a check list and declaration that it is safe. It's a more robust ordinance than she originally thought. She also called mayors' office about lighting in Laurel Park. The mayor had mentioned that there would be lighting in the park but the parks department didn't want to install it. She's been doing follow up on that is waiting to hear back from the mayor. Christenson asked if Thomas can tell them more about the ordinance. Thomas said the system that exists right now is that there are building code enforcement officers under the police department. They cite people if their buildings are unsafe. There is a three strike system before they cite anyone. This would still exist under new system, but the inspection would be either be done by a building inspector or private entities. The system involves the safe guards students are looking for. There are 13 things they have include when they register their building. It would be easier to hold landlords accountable than it is under the current system. If it is thought to be that the landlord isn't following the ordinance, then there is the option to require a certificate of inspection before renewing registration. There are a lot more provisions than she thought, a lot of great provisions to make sure the students are protected. Christenson asked what the landlord registration is. Thomas said anyone who runs any unit would have to fill out this check list and register their names on a list serv.

D. Western Votes!

Mayra Guizar, Western Votes! rep said this past Tuesday Western Votes! had its first official meeting. There was good turnout. They talked about what WSA, Western Votes! and USSA are and how they collaborate, as well as what they'll be doing over the years. JulieAnne Behar, WSA Organizing Director, was there. Next week we'll be going over training for doorbelling for trick or vote.

VI. Presentations

A. Legislative Agendas 2007-2014

Kohout said she wanted to go over previous legislative agendas. They are in the binders. The style has changed, it used to explain the topic and then have asks. Now there are a couple sections and a couple asks, which strengthens the proposals. The most relevant agenda to this council would be the last few years. It's good to look at things that passed, like the DREAM Act. This is what the legislators get when students go into their offices. The plan is that the group will brain storm ideas and decide what they want to work on and break into small groups. They'll take what's proposed and write it into agenda form. There will be 3-4 items.

B. Issue Choosing and Brainstorming

Christenson said money for Carver Academic Facility should be on the agenda. Heffelmire said they should include dedicated revenue. Kohout said she's heard the landlord tenant act is subjective and that they could work on that. Thomas said she disagrees, it's pretty straight forward. Sam Goldblatt said one thing that it is iffy about is mold, which is something they could lobby on. But she does agree with Thomas, its pretty air tight and does greatly support the tenant. Christenson dittos. Heffelmire said she would like to see something in the agenda about campus sexual assault and plugging into the national campaigns. Mathyer said drafting something about rental rights and then distributing it to students is something they could do to help with renters rights. Christenson said there should be discussion on responsible revenue levels. His fear is that they will take money from higher education to fund K-12, as mandated by the McCleary decision. Thomas said if it doesn't pass on the ballot, something about gun control. Guizar said more funding for the Ethnic Student Center and recruiting and retaining faculty and students. Heffelmire said responsible revenue, as Christenson was talking about, can tie into WSA's defining affordability item. Christenson dittos. Lily Jaquith, Board Assistant for Representation Committees said that she does not want to interfere as the

secretary, but as a WSA Executive Board member she thinks that voter access should be on the agenda. There is a lot of support right now from the Secretary of State and county auditors and it could get a lot of traction. Kohout said she knows WSA is also looking at more services for graduate students, that's something we could put down. Savinski said academic tutoring and mental health support. Heffelmire she would love if they could take some of Kenna-Schenk's ideas going into this agenda. She thinks they should collaborate with the administration as much as possible. Kohout said this could all be titled students success. Christenson said depending on how funding turns out, he think they should consider support for the major and doctoral programs the university is supporting. Working with them as much as possible doesn't hurt them. Kohout said she agrees.

C. Becca Kenna-Schenk; University Legislative Priorities

Becca Kenna-Schenk, Director of Government Relations, said she is excited to be here, this is her third or fourth week in this job. For the last year she was the Government Relations Director of the Washington Student Achievement Council. She worked for the legislative intern program and through that she worked with a lot of Western students. She's worked with other students in Heffelmire's position. She's thrilled to work with the council during this session and beyond 2015. She is new to Western and Bellingham. She has much to learn and hopes everyone will be willing to help her with the learning process. She brought some handouts. Carver Academic Facility is their top funding request. The AS had it on their agenda last year, it would be good if they did it again this year. It has been a difficult budget situation, Carver has been especially difficult because it's viewed as a gym. They call it an academic facility now. The number one goal is trying to figure out how to make that happen. Western also has Wade King Recreational Center. She's going to draw the difference between them because Carver is academic. She would love to hear other ideas on the most compelling messages and would love to be on message with students. The other one-pager on the operational side of Western's request. The university's budget was submitted in September. It was request that they also send in what 15% budget cuts would look like for the university. President Bruce Shepard took a stance against it and other institutions followed. That was affective. She will also be lobbying on compensation for faculty and staff, an issue beyond just higher education. They're also looking for funding for a "student success" package. This is money that would come to the university and then be used on a variety of student service. They would also look to fund three new academic programs. Heffelmire said thank you for coming, she love the one pagers. They were just talking about the recruitment of historically marginalized communities. She asked Kenna-Schenk to walk the council through the through the process of carver on the budget side. Kenna-Schenk said there are three state budgets, capital, operational, transportation. All three start with the governor's proposals. Those will come out around December 20. It is important that what they want is on that budget. The way that it works is that OFM creates a peer review process for higher education request. The capital request gets scored and Carver gets scored well. It is important is get on the governor's budget because the legislature doesn't want to get into favoritism. Christenson asked if this is the long session and last was short. Kenna-Schenk said yes. It will last 105 days, ending the last week in April. People are joking that they'll be in session until August. June is a reasonable bet. It almost takes the pressure of the clock and potential shut down to force them to do something. The governor will call 30 day special session and then will do it again. The worst case scenario is that in august there would be some sort of temporary appropriations. Thomas asked what OFM is. Kenna-Schenk said it is the Office of Financial Management, the state's budget office. Heffelmire asked if the government shuts down, would Western shut down. Kenna-Schenk said no and mostly because of timing. Well, actually in part it would. Non-essential employees would be asked not to come back. The people who really needed to be here to keep things moving would be here. Most people would asked to leave. Christenson asked if

they allow for continuing resolutions. Kenna-Schenk said yes. She calls them Band-Aid solutions. They might be able to make it through the summer, but they would have to do continuing resolutions after July. Board recesses for five minutes. Back at 7:03 p.m.

VII. Information Items

A. USSA November and January Board Meeting Funding Request

Guizar said the USSA board of directors meets once every two months and there are two BoD meetings in this request. They are in November and January. She will be funding \$509 for travel to Sea Tac and back and food. She is asking for funding from Seattle to New Jersey and Seattle to Arizona. She will update airport for next week, as she will be flying into Flagstaff instead of Phoenix. Next week she will bring in work she's been doing. Heffelmire asked where this money come from. Kohout said student use. The budget isn't an action item because she has not been able to meet with Morgan Burke, Business Director. Heffelmire said she would wants to raise the amount. Kohout said they can talk about that after they know exactly what their revenue would be like. Christenson said he would love to fund Mayra more, but he is concerned about being able to fund her throughout the entire year. He would like her to let the council know how many additional trips this will require. Guizar said this is it. There are two more board meetings besides this, one is at LegCon, so that funding request will be different. The other is in May and will be held at WWU. She is glad he brings that up though because there may be costs with people coming over, which would come in the form of meals. Christenson said his objections are withdrawn. He would like to see something closer to actual cost of these trips. Kohout said they've talked about fundraising. She is wondering if Guizar could fundraise and then LAC cover the rest. Guizar said she is working with the USSA financial executive to do some fundraising and starting a go fund me. That's what she's looking at now.

VIII. Action Items

A. Board Assistant for Viking Lobby Day Extra Hours Proposal

Kohout said they saw this last week. It is additional hours for the Viking lobby day staff. It is going to be a cool position. There have been no changes since last week.

MOTION LAC-14-F-4 by Christenson

Moves to approve the board assistant for Viking lobby day extra hours proposal.

Second: Guizar Vote: 10-0-0 Action: passed

IX. New Business

A. Vice Chair Nominations

Heffelmire nominates Belina Seare, she accepts. Thomas, nominates Sam Goldblatt, she accepts. Christenson nominates himself. Kohout said she will open up nominations next week. Goldblatt asked what the responsibilities are. Kohout said they would chair when she can't make it. Heffelmire said be a resource and helping the chair draft up budget requests, etc. It is not a heavy work load, very manageable.

B. Meeting Change

Kohout said she will email everyone about changing the October 30 meeting.

C Legislative Item Groups

The council got into groups to discuss legislative agenda items.

Carver
-Christenson
Dedicate revenue
-Heffelmire
-Christenson
Campus sexual assault prevention
-Savinski
-Guizar
Student success
-Simrell
-Thomas
-Goldblatt
-Guizar
-Seare
-Heffelmire
Voter access
-Seare
-Kohout

Heffelmire asked when things should be in. Kohout said the October 23. Next week will be a check in. Lisa Rosenberg, Assistant Director of Student Activities, said collaborations will come in creating these. There are some great resources on campus.

X. Next Meeting Date
October 16, 2014

XI. Adjourn

The Meeting was adjourned at 7:34p.m.