

**Western Washington University Associated Students
Legislative Affairs Council
Thursday, November 20, 2014 VU 567**

Present: Sarah Kohout (ASVP for Governmental Affairs), Heather Heffelmire (Legislative Liaison), James Mayther, Katie Savinski, Cody Simrell, Belina Seare, Sam Goldblatt, Nora Selander, Elizabeth Pebley

Absent: Kendra Thomas (Local Liaison), Mayra Guizar (Western Votes! rep), Neil Christenson

Advisor: Lisa Rosenberg, Assistant Director of Student Activities

Secretary: Lily Jaquith, Board Assistant for Representation Committees

Guest: JulieAnne Behar (WSA Organizing Director), Patrick Eckroth (REP Director), Annika Wolters (AS President), Cristina Rodriguez (ASVP for Diversity), Jaleesa Smiley (ASVP for Academic Affairs)

MOTIONS

LAC-14-F-29 Approve the minutes from November 13, 2014

LAC-14-F-30 Moves to add the bullet point “prioritize enough new _____ and dedicated revenue in a way that will allow for the university to set lower tuition.”

LAC-14-F-31 Moves to pass the letter with updated language.

Sarah Kohout, Chair of Legislative Affairs Council, called the meeting to order at 6:00pm

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. Additions and Changes to the Agenda

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION LAC-14-F - _____ by Heffelmire

Approve the minutes from November 13, 2014

Second: Selander Vote: 8-0-1 Action:

IV. Public Forum

Patrick Eckroth, Representation and Engagement Programs Director, said he wants to let people know about opportunities in their office. There are two positions available. One is a work study position that if it doesn't get filled will turn into internship. They serve as a legislative research assistant. It's great experience. If you have any questions ask Sarah or Heather or head to VU435, the REP's office. The second position is the election board chair. It is a paid position. They act as the chair for the election board that hears grievances during elections. That's also closing on Friday but most likely will continue to the Friday of the next week.

V. REPORTS

A. VP for Governmental Affairs

Kohout said Viking Lobby Day registration opened on Monday. The new Board Assistant for VLD, Lulu, is working now. That's really awesome. She's excited to work with her. She's

working on the finalization of buses, hotel, food, etc. Today she went to Olympia with Heather for committee days.

B. Legislative Liaison

Heather Heffelmire, Legislative Liaison, said Western Takes Olympia was a great event. It went really well. It was a great way to outreach and get people excited about lobbying. She's happy with the event overall. She's hoping it becomes institutionalized. She went to committee days with Sarah today. That was great experience. She met Sen. Barbara Bailey., gate keeper to higher education in the senate. She's the one will let a bill go onto the floor. She's a sweet little lady, different than how Heffelmire imagined. They had great conversation in the bathroom. It was a great experience, really pumped her up. This Committee is really important to Heffelmire. She wants to make sure as a body they continue to be respectful. If someone doesn't want to be here, that's fine. But they need to keep the space comfortable and respectful.

C. Local Liaison

Kohout said Kendra Thomas, Local Liaison, is unable to make it today. She submitted a written statement to Kohout:

Rental Safety

- Council instructed staff to prepare an ordinance that includes mandatory inspections
 - o Staff will propose multiple options regarding how many units will be inspected, how often, different fee structures, incentive structures, etc.
- Voted unanimously to include a mandatory educational component that requires landlords to provide information to tenants about their rights and resources, the planning director will advertise a website that has information about rental resources, laws, rights and responsibilities for tenants, landlords, and property managers.
 - o The amendment authorizes the planning director to create outreach and instructional classes regarding requirements of this program but did not require this. It also seems that this is more geared towards the program than general tenant rights, but there will naturally be some overlap.
- The checklist of health and safety standards will include many great aspects, including pests, ventilation, locks, smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, heating, room dimensions, plumbing and leaks, hot water, fire safety, and more.
 - o Unfortunately mold/mildew can't be on the checklist because WA's legislature determined that mold is unregulatable. The ventilation component of the checklist is partially an attempt to address.
- Voted to make the registration deadline for all units and to eliminate the 6-month staggering of deadlines between units east of 15 and west of 15.

Staff will be required to report back annually to the Council on the status of the program and there will be a réévaluation of the program after three years.

D. Western Votes!

Kohout said they had their General Assembly on Tuesday. They added some language to the bylaws about USSA, including making Kohout the main contact. Eckroth said they eliminated the requirement of two general assemblies a year as well as some small changes so the bylaws and cooperative contract work together. Kohout said then they had updates about the USSA campaigns, Lily Jaquith, WSA VP of Communication, gave a WSA update. The group also stood in solidarity with the Universities of California, who are seeing extreme tuition hikes over the next several years.

VI. Presentations

A. JulieAnne Behar, WSA Organizing Director

JulieAnne Behar, WSA Organizing Director, said she is one of two staff for the WSA. The rest of the organization is student run and student led. WSA is a statewide on-profit organization. They've been around for 30 years. It is a coalition of the public four year colleges and universities. Really it's their student governments, not faculty or administration. They have monthly board of directors meetings. The next one is at WWU on Dec. 13. She encourages people to go. It's cool to see what it looks like when 10 different schools come together. The one thing they always come together on is higher education. They're all students and higher education is a universal priority for all students. They talk about funding, accessibility, affordability, etc. Her capacity is to come to each campus twice a quarter. It's important to hear about the decisions campuses are making. It speaks about what WWU is doing and how that shapes WSA's work. She'll answer any questions people have. She will be around today and tomorrow and would be willing to chat with people. *Eckroth leaves.*

B. Federal Tegislatve Agenda 2014 (Doc 1)

Kohout said now they're on to the federal agenda. She's provided last years. They'll draft an agenda that will look similar to this. Annika and she will lobby on this at their federal lobby trip. It's not super time sensitive. She would like to check in with folks on Dec. 4 and check in with folks at the beginning of the year.

C. Federal Tegislatve Proposal Request (Doc 2)

Kohout said this proposal form is simpler.

D. Brainstorm for Federal Agenda

Kohout said the committee should brainstorm. Fisa Rosenberg, Assistant Director of Student Activities, asked if she knew the status of last year's federal agenda items. Kohout said student debt will always be an issue and the DREAM Act didn't pass. Heffelmire said the Department of Education did go after one of the biggest for-profit universities. The DA did take them to court and so one of the schools is in bankruptcy because they lost funding. That's good because those schools go away, but students then have debt. For-profit debt is a large portion of student debt. She thinks this is something that definitely should be on the agenda again. They're taking up a lot of federal financial aid. They target already low income communities. There's a bill that's been up, they want to change the difference of federal funding to 85%-15%, meaning 15% of their funding can't come from federal funding. The reauthorization of the higher education act is also important. Mayther said it would be good to explain numbers for each of the items. Kohout said she could get numbers from a presentation they had today at committee days. Mayther asked on the "increase fund to the federal work study program," was the intended to be reallocation of federal budget funds or Behar said she's guessing reallocation. Savinski said she would like to include more about the nation movement on campus sexual assault. There is a specific bill in the USSA update on it. Seare said she'd like to see something about the national push for more support for students of color. Heffelmire said that could tie into fully funding trio programs and upward bound. There could also be something about making FAFSA easier to use. Savinski said there are very specific terms and it's hard to get out of it. Behar, said one statewide priority is graduate and professional student issues. There's a lot more that can be done on the federal level. Kohout said she thinks these are good things. She asked if the board would like to assign groups or wait a week. Goldblatt said she thinks it's a good idea to wait until next week. Kohout said she agrees.

E. Viking Tobby Day Recruitment

Kohout said they're trying to get 110 people to Viking Tobby Day. There will be a waitlist if more than that apply. Fast year a lot of people didn't show up. She would love the committee to help as much as they can, reaching out to friends, class raps, sharing the Facebook event. Rosenberg said

F. Teg Con Recruitment

Kohout said the USSA Grassroots Legislative Conference application opens on Sunday. She's hoping this body can help recruit.

VII. Information Items

VII. Action Items

VIII. Other Business

Kohout said members should fill out winter quarter doodle. The board of directors has asked to have something in the legislative agenda about a tuition freeze or tuition lowering. Savinski said initially she doesn't think it doesn't not fit. But if they decide to add it they should include a tuition reduction. Jaleesa Smiley, ASVP for Academic Affairs, said they always want to elaborate more about lower tuition inside the revenue section. Kohout said they need to acknowledge that the university has tuition setting authority. She's concerned because the legislature doesn't have any control over tuition. So if it's a separate bullet point they're asking the legislature to do, it could throw meetings off because a student might not be as knowledgeable about that. Heffelmire asked if the students that came know about the process. Kohout said yes. She's thought about having it in the letter. Savinski said saying that the best financial aid is lower tuition would be really good. Seare asked if this will this be taken back to the board. Kohout said yes. Goldblatt said they should have it in the agenda. Savinski moves to add bullet point "prioritize enough new and dedicated revenue in a way that will allow for the university to set lower tuition." Mayther seconds. Motion passes. The council edits the legislative agenda letter for grammar and minor content. Goldblatt moves to pass the letter with updated language. Selander seconds. Motion passes. Kohout said she gave the registrar's office all students' statement and the minutes stating they approved it. It should be an easy fix. There is no meeting next week, then a December 4 meeting, then the time that works best is Monday Dec. 8, at 2 p.m. Heffelmire said thanks to Kohout for the hard work. Kohout said thanks to everyone.

MOTION LAC-14-F-30 by Savinski

Moves to add the bullet point "prioritize enough new and dedicated revenue in a way that will allow for the university to set lower tuition."

Second: Mayther Vote: 9-0-0 Action: Passed

MO TION LA C-M-F -31 By Goldblatt

Moves to pass the letter with updated language.

Second: Selander Vote: 9-0-0 Action: Passed

IX. Next Meeting Date **December 4, 2014**

X. Adjourn

The Meeting was adjourned at 7:31