

**Western Washington University Associated Students
Legislative Affairs Council
Wednesday, January 28, 2015, VU 567**

Present: Sarah Kohout (ASVP for Governmental Affairs), Heather Heffelmire (Legislative Liaison), Mayra Guizar (Westem Votes! Rep), Kendra Thomas (Local Liaison), Sam Goldblatt, Nora Selander, Adam Schaefer

Absent: James Mayther, Katie Savinski, Cody Simrell, Belina Seare
Advisor: Lisa Rosenberg, Assistant Director of Student Activities
Secretary: Lily Jaquith, Board Assistant for Representation Committees
Guest: Haley Newhouse

MOTIONS

LAC-15-W-3 Move the local agenda to an action item.
LAC-15-W-4 Move the environmental lobby day funding request to an action item.
LAC-15-W-5 Approve the funding for environmental lobby day.
LAC-15-W-6 Approve the local agenda.

Sarah Kohout, Chair of Legislative Affairs Council, called the meeting to order at 5:05pm

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. Additions and Changes to the Agenda

MO TION LA C-15- W-3 By Thomas

Move the local agenda to an action item

Second: Selander Vote: 6-0-0 Action: Passed

MO TION LA C-15- W-4 by Kohout

Move environmental lobby day funding request to an action item

Second: Thomas Vote: 6-0-0 Action: Passed

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

IV. Public Forum

V. REPORTS

A. VP for Governmental Affairs

Kohout said she has been working on a couple lobby days, environmental lobby days, Ethnic Student Center lobby day and human services lobby day. It's going to be awesome to have so many people down there. She's working on a job description for the Representation and Engagement Programs and working on with Mayra for LegCon and working with Annika on the federal lobby trip. They have some visits coming up next week. JulieAnne Behar, Washington Student Association Organizing Director, will be here next week and then the week after Aja Campbell, United States Student Association West Coast National Field Organizer and Beth Huang, Student Labor Action Project Coordinator, will be on campus.

B. Legislative Liaison

Heather Heffelmire, Legislative Liaison, said that they're seeing a lot of bills coming up, she testified on a bill today. There are a lot of voter access bills coming up. Motor voter will be coming up in the house state government operations committee tomorrow. They're doing a lot with dedicated revenue, they've really started to talk about the need for revenue. She met with Rep. Jinkins and they talked about the regressive tax policy. That ties into Washington being 49th for higher education. She wants to do work on campus surrounding those two issues. Changing the tax policy could have benefits for higher education and other social services. On HB 1148, it's kind of a pay-it-forward model. It would turn state need grant into a loan that would work as a pay-it-forward sort of thing. It would only affect graduates once they have \$30,000 of taxable income. It does some important things like fully funding the state need grant. The biggest problem is that it turns a grant program into a loan program. She likes the bill, but there's a lot of problems and the WSA has a lot of concerns. She doesn't think they should take free money and turn it into loans. It's similar to how she feels about pay-it-forward. This doesn't really get to the root of the problem, which is state divestment from higher education. This is a bill that they would want to come out against or with concerns, if the committee decides to take a stance on it. On SB 5259, it mandates that landlords provide new tenants with new voter registration materials. It would be really effective on campus because new tenants are technically students moving into dorms. Western has a good voter registration program, but it would help campuses that don't have the same opportunities. Austin Wright-Pettibone, Associated Students of the University of Washington Director of Government Relations, called in last week to talk about workability for affordability. He took time to call in and he did say there were concerns with the tone in the meeting. So if someone calls in, even if members disagree with the caller, they should be treated with respect. She'd be happy to take questions on anything. Thomas asked if she happened to know if the pay-it-forward bill is similar to what Oregon is doing. Heffelmire said it's a little different because it's changing the need-based grant program. They're similar because they're not paying upfront but the funding source is different.

C. Local Liaison

Kendra Thomas, Local Liaison, said she went to a Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Committee meeting. They're working on Fairhaven parking growing as population grows. She met with the Campus Community Coalition coordinator today, she wants to visit an LAC meeting in a couple weeks. They're creating a social media app for students living off campus. The content will be developed over the summer. She wants the AS and some departments to have posting ability. She talked about having a widget on the AS site or My Western. They talked about changing the local liaison position to also be an administrative liaison, they're working on different titles now.

D. Western Votes!

Mayra Guizar, Western Votes! Rep, said at Western Votes! they got the opportunity to talk about their experiences with Viking Lobby Day. Then they went through and watched a clip on for profit colleges. They talked a little about it but it would be cool to revisit it. This is the first introduction to it for some people. Thomas shared the local agenda, they talked about that and answered some questions. They also went through the WSA's legislative agenda did some voter access letter writing. Hopefully they can bring in some laptops and do more letter writing. Campbell and Huang will be here after Behar will be here. They will be doing campaign work when they come. Western Votes! is hoping to have a joint meeting with SLAP. It's overlapping work sometimes. It would be good to work together on these issues. That's what they're hoping to do during a joint meeting soon.

VI. Presentations

VII. Information Items

A. Environmental Lobby Day Agenda Item: Climate Change

Kohout said this is one of the two items that they want to send over. This was the only one available this week, she hopes to move them both to action next week. Thomas asked what they would be approving. Kohout said just the item, similar to how they approved other agenda. This is just for environmental lobby day.

VIII. Action Items

A. Environmental Lobby Day Funding Request

Kohout said on February 16 the Environmental and Sustainability Programs is going to have a 36 passenger bus go to Olympia. She's helping Sadie Normoyle, Environmental and Sustainability Programs Director, with the schedule, but they're handling a lot of the responsibility. Normoyle couldn't be here, she has a test tomorrow. There's a quote in the notebooks for the cost. Thomas said she noticed that there extra fees not included in the rate, including gratuity and gas surcharge. Kohout said they can't pay gratuity and there's no gas surcharge because gas is so low right now. This has been really successful in the past.

MO TION LA C-15- W-5 by Guizar

Approve the environmental lobby day funding request

Second: Thomas

Vote: 6-0-0

Action: Passed

B. Local Agenda Items

Thomas said the improvements they talked about for Lincoln Creek Park and Ride is already planned. There are two items, clinics about renter rights and student housing, both of which she talked about with the Campus Community Coalition today, they're an additional supporter. Ideally the tenant education plan would be a phased in approach. The first being a video for students to watch and the second being in person workshops that would also be available to community members. She's talked to the previous city council president and she seemed to indicate they would be willing to do this. She needs to talk to the current city council about it. The second item is on student housing. It's tricky because of planning regulations. She talked with CCC about the current off campus housing website the university has. It's pretty sparse and has a registry that doesn't work anymore. They talked about adding in some content and somehow coordinating the off campus housing registry with the registry that's formed once the city passes ordinances around rental registration. They're also hoping to lobby for the city having some sort of private/public partnership with whoever ends up developing the site of the Aloha Motel. It's tricky because it hasn't been officially condemned yet. *Sam Goldblatt enters.* Lisa Rosenberg, Assistant Director of Student Activities, said she thinks phase one might be more difficult than phase two of the tenant education. Thomas said the second phases kind of exists as it is with the AS Legal Information Center. The main difference would be the consistency, having them offered on a regular basis and having more coordination. *Heffelmire ends phone call.* Goldblatt said the rental clinics the LIC is doing now are in the dorms. Whatcom Law Advocates have talked about doing monthly clinics. Thomas said one other things CCC talked about is that some of a videos have modules included, but they're not mandatory. The videos could include something about rental safety. It's an uphill battle to make it mandatory but they could start at optional. Kohout said thanks to Thomas and that it looks really good.

MO TION LA C-15- W-6 by Thomas

Approve the local agenda

Second: Goldblatt

Vote: 6-0-0

Action: Passed.

XI. Discussion Items

X. Other Business

XI. Next Meeting Date
February 4, 2015

XII. Adjourn

The Meeting was adjourned at 5:47p.m.