

**Western Washington University Associated Students
Legislative Affairs Council
Wednesday, February 4, 2015, VU 567**

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

Absent:

Advisor: Lisa Rosenberg, Assistant Director of Student Activities

Secretary: Lily Jaquith, Board Assistant for Representation Committees

Guest: Haley Newhouse

MOTIONS

LAC-15-W-7 Approve the minutes from January 14, 2015

LAC-15-W-8 Approve the Environmental Lobby Day Agenda.

LAC-15-W-9 Approve the consent agenda

Sarah Kohout, Chair of Legislative Affairs Council, called the meeting to order at 5:00pm

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. Additions and Changes to the Agenda

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MO TIONLA C-15- W - 7 by Goldblatt

Approve the minutes from January 14, 2015

Second: Thomas Vote: Unanimous Action: Passed

IV. Public Forum

JulieAnne Behar, Washington Student Association Organizing Director, said she there to hear about what LAC is working on and to get updated on their winter projects. She wants to know what they're expecting from the WS A. They have some upcoming events, including a board meeting coming up on Lebruary 14, she invites all of them to come spend Valentine's Day with them. In additions to the upcoming meetings they will be having some on campus activities. Lebruary 25 is one of their statewide day of action on college affordability. They'll be calling legislators about some priorities. She'll be on campus all day tomorrow, so if they have questions feel free to come find her and talk to her. At the meeting on the 14th they'll be identifying some days when students can come down and represent students in person. It's important that they hold legislators accountable and that they keep hearing from students.

V. REPORTS

A. VP for Governmental Affairs

Kohout said there are some lobby days coming up, environmental and ethnic student center lobby days. She's been planning for those lobby days. If anyone is interested, ESC lobby day might be full, but the environmental lobby day might have some open spots so she can email out that information. She's also working on LegCon and PEHR lobby days as well.

B. Legislative Liaison

Heather Heffelmire, Legislative Liaison, said she's given testimony twice this week on motor voter pre-registration. Today she testified on senate bill 1058, around sexual assault issues. If people would like more information, she can give that. Tomorrow she will testify on some language around in-state tuition for student veterans. She got information today bill that was dropped today by Sen. Jayapal on police officers wearing body cameras. She would like the AS to take a stance on that. They will organize around the Black Student Union. There's not a big chance it will get a hearing in the senate, so she's really going to be working to mobilize students on that. If people are interested in helping, she would be happy to organize with them. They've seen big movement on the voter access bill. Carver Academic Facility will definitely get funded, it just depends on whether or not it'll be fully funded, which they need. The governor left out everything but 16 million. He thinks the rest could be funded by local money, alumni dollars, bonds or instituting a fee on students. But none of those are appropriate, it's a public building it needs to be funded by the state, that's their stance. She'll send out some documents on that. Kendra Thomas, Local Liaison, asked if they are saying that local funds for carver should come from the city. Heffelmire said yes it was coming up, that she understands because it is a building used throughout the county. Basically what they were suggesting was that WWU would sell bonds to make money off of. There would also be debt that would be incurred and that would add up to more than the original amount they would be borrowing. Thomas said if they bring up the city or county paying for it, let her know so that she can give them information to bring up to them. Heffelmire said she's going to talk to Becca Kenna Schenk, Director of Government Relations, and cc Thomas on it.

C. Local Liaison

Thomas said not a whole lot has happened. The Campus Community Coalition Coordinator, Carmen Rasmussen contacted her last week to let her know she was asked to be on the city focus group about rolling out rental registration. They will be in contact regarding that, making sure that not just the university's voice but the Associated Students' voice is heard in that task force. Other than that she's been doing a lot of research on getting the local agenda implemented.

D. Western Votes!

Kohout said that Behar spoke at the Western Votes! meeting. Heffelmire called in and then they did a letter writing campaign to the governmental operations committee about the voter access bills. If anyone is interested in writing their own letter, she can email them about that. They're going to do a collaboration meeting with the Student Labor Action Project (SLAP).

VI. Presentation Items

A. JulieAnne Behar, WS A

Behar asked if Thomas's commenting on implementing rental registration was if the bill in the legislature is heard or if Bellingham goes ahead and implements voter registration by landlords. Thomas said it's not related to voter registration, it's registering rental units and landlords and having mandatory inspections. Seattle just did this and Bellingham is about to pass it. Behar said she does have a lot of legislative session related information, she can provide them with those one pagers. She can also share people on the bill tracker. She can get people signed up on the email list.

B. WS A Budget Proposal

Kohout said WS A has formed a committee to re-evaluate the dues structure. She wanted the committee to be aware of some of the proposals. One of the ideas was a flat fee. There's another option for a \$25,000 cap that would affect University of Washington Seattle and their Graduate and Professional Student Senate and Washington State University Pullman. There's also a tiered structure that would have different sized schools pay different amounts. She'll keep the group

updated.

C. WSA Bill Tracker

Kohout said this is the WSA bill tracker, it's a list of bills that WSA is working on or just watching. Some that the committee has talked about are on here, including the kids first bill, open source text books and then some that are more campus specific. Behar said one place that student feedback is important is looking at defining college affordability. There are several affordability metrics out there including 10% of median family income, which would make tuition significantly lower than the workability method. That is critical feedback. This is a new issue the more students weighing in on the issue the better.

D. Brainstorm for Federal Lobby Trip

Kohout said it's time to start preparing the federal agenda. She wanted to start a couple proposals and brainstorm today. There were only four items on the agenda last year, but they can increase or decrease that. Heffelmire mentioned for profit colleges might be an item. Belina Seare said there are two bills on the USSA State of Emergency campaign. That might be something for them to do. Kohout asked if she wants to be the point person on that. Seare said yes. Adam Schaefer said he suggests the free community college for everyone. Kohout asked if he wants to be the point person. Schaefer said yes. Behar said she's not sure of the status, but the funding for the Pell Grant. Seare said that's on USSA's agenda. Kohout said Justin Habler, USSA Legislative Director, talked about that. She said they might want to put the re-authorization of the Higher Education Act on it. Does anyone want to work on for profit colleges? Nora Selander said she would. Thomas said she would. Haley Newhouse said she would. Selander agrees to be the point person. Kohout said Oscar Aguirre, Western Votes! President, is interested in working on State of Emergency. Is anyone else wants to help with free community college or funding Pell? Schaefer said he'd like to do funding the Pell grant. Seare said yes to funding Pell. Sam Goldblatt said she wants to be on the re-authorization of the Higher Education Act. Behar said the Higher Education Act is a huge umbrella of high education. Its dictates how higher education is funded at the federal level, all title 9 statutes and other things regarding higher education. It's up for reauthorization every six years. Schaefer said they could do something on alternative energy. He's interested in working on it. Kohout said the proposal format would be similar to the one for the local agenda and the environmental lobby day agenda. Behar said there's also been a lot around student loan debt forgiveness. She's not sure if that's up for discussion right now but it would be good to look into. Kohout said she can work on that.

VI. Information Items

VII. Action Items

A. Environmental Lobby Day Agenda

Kohout said that Sadie Normoyle, AS Environmental and Sustainability Programs Director, added another component to it about oil train safety.

MO TION LA C-15- W-8 by Seare

Moves to approve the Environmental Lobby Day Agenda.

Second: Thomas

Vote: 6-0-0

Action: Passed

VIII. Consent Agenda

A. Bill Stances

I. SB 5140 (Motor Voter) II. SB 5484 and HB (Removing Local Tuition Authority) III. SB 5259 and HB 1866 (New Tenants Voter Registration) IV. SB 5527 and HB 1428 (11 Day Registration) V. HB 1820 (Waiver for EBT on College Campuses) VI. HB 1138 (Suicide Prevention Taskforce) VII. HB 1500 (Higher Education Cost Drivers)

MO TION LA C-15- W-9 by Thomas
Moves to approve the consent agenda.
Second: Schaefer Vote: 6-0-0

Action: Passed

VIII. Other Business

IX. Next Meeting Date
February 11, 2015, 5 p.m., VU 567

X. Adjourn

The Meeting was adjourned at 6:02