

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

Present: Sarah Kohout (ASVP for Governmental Affairs), Heather Heffelmire (Legislative Liaison), Cody Simrell, Belina Seare, Sam Goldblatt, Nora Selander, Haley Newhouse, McKenzie Dent, Adam Schaefer

Absent: Luciane DeAlmeida, Mayra Guizar (Western Votes! Rep), Kendra Thomas (Local Liaison)

Advisor: Lisa Rosenberg, Assistant Director of Student Activities

Secretary: Lily Jaquith, Board Assistant for Representation Committees

Guest:

MOTIONS

LAC-15-S-1 Approve the minutes from March 4, 2015

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

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MO TIONLA C-15-S -1 by Schaefer

Approve the minutes from March 4, 2015

Second: Goldblatt

Vote: 9-0-0

Action: Passed

IV. Public Forum

V. REPORTS

A. VP for Governmental Affairs

Kohout said yesterday she went down to Olympia for the Washington Student Association lobby day. They met with Sen. John Braun and Sen. Barbara Bailey. They've spearheaded the tuition reduction bill, SB 5954. Sen. Bailey is also chair of the senate higher education committee. They had a meeting with Rep. Drew Hansen, chair of the house higher education committee. They also did floor pulls, they pulled two people off the floor but they were pretty busy. They saw Becca Kenna-Schenk, Director of Government Relations. She testified on the senate capital budget where they got \$70 million for Carver Academic Facility. So she thanked them. She's planning the upcoming trip to Washington D.C. with President Bruce Shepard, Steve Swan, Vice President for University Relations and Community Development, Annika Wolters, AS President and Zach Dugovich, AS VP for Student Life. They'll lobby on the agenda LAC created. Sam Goldblatt, LAC Vice Chair, will be chairing next week.

B. Legislative Liaison

Heffelmire said she wants to talk more about the budgets that have been released. The budget released by the senate lowers tuition, the house freezes tuition. It looks good for higher

education either way, the likelihood of tuition going up is very low. The senate bill would take down tuition 27%. However it's not that great because it takes money from the state need grant and they don't fully fund the school. So that \$5.5 million would come out of other places that students need in order to graduate. She also has a problem lowering tuition on the backs of students getting the state need grant. It also disproportionately affects student of color, low income students and first generation students. They have a duty to those students in the institutions. She's in favor of the house budget. They also fully fund the state need grant, they haven't fully funded the state need grant in a long time. It also gives money to the student success packages. So advising would have increase. Both budgets are good for higher education, but the house budget looks at being a student holistically. In the end, either way it'll be good for higher education, students won't see a rise in tuition.

C. Local Liaison

Kendra Thomas, Local Liaison, was not present at the meeting.

D. Western Votes!

Kohout said they're doing a day of action next week on Carver Academic Facility. Everyone should've gotten an email about it. It'll be in red square next week. McKenzie Dent said it'll be on Wednesday.

VI. Information Items

A. Funding Request for General Assembly

Kohout said this funds an extra car to go to the WSA general assembly in May. She did think they were going to be able to use the motorpool cars, but the Outdoor Center is using them. She's looking from the committee to fund not to exceed \$200 to fund a vehicle to go to general assembly on May 2 at Central Washington University. It's important because not only is it necessary for people with WSA in their job description to go, but it's important for people planning on running for executive board positions or who are writing proposals or students haven't had the chance to experience WSA. Her first experience with WSA was a general assembly, it was a really good experience. It's a really good leadership development opportunity. They're able to fund one car to go through her personal budget, so they're just asking for one to give other students the opportunity to go. Unfortunately they can't guarantee more than 14 students. Enterprise doesn't give her solid numbers on how many seats she has until the week before. There are new cars being bought so this shouldn't be something that occurs again. She was able to talk to Lisa Wochos, Assistant Attorney General, to try and get her to focus some of her attention on deciding whether or not they can use financial aid to pay for the fee. That will change their budget considerably at the end of the year. They won't really see it until then. As of the last report, they have \$23,000 in that fund. WSA dues, the USSA board meeting and USSSA congress are the only thing that will need to come out of there. She's not sure if that includes revenue from this quarter. Goldblatt asked what the cost of this is. Kohout said it'll be about \$200, she said that to be safe. It's for both gas and the car. This will be an action item next week.

B. Support for HB 2224

Heffelmire said this is a proposal for HB 2224. This is a bill for a capital gains tax. It would tax a certain amount of money that's made off of money. Schaefer said it's a tax on the increase of the value on anything. It could one's house or stock. It's anything you make money off of because the value of it increased. Heffelmire said it would tax a very high level of income too. Some people hear the "t" word and freak out. This would bring in \$1.5 billion in new revenue. It would go to education, transportation, bridges, etc. It would go to a lot of things that the state needs. Rep. Hansen, chair of the house higher education committee, specifically asked students to support this bill. She's excited for this, it could do a lot for

students as a whole. New and dedicated revenue is on the legislative agenda too. Kohout said she thinks they specifically have a capital gains on the agenda. Garrett Havens, WSA Executive Director, said a referendum has to be run on this, is that true? Heffelmire said it may have to be, because the state passed something about new taxes needs a referendum. Lily Jaquith, AS Board Assistant for Representation Committees, said that Havens said that support for a capital gains tax is pretty popular in the state right now. Schaefer said the bill does other things too. It also makes adjustments on B&O taxes because Washington has kind of a funky B&O taxes.

VII. Action Items

VIII. Discussion Items

A. WSA Proposal Items Brainstorm

Kohout said one of the things that happens at general assembly are they pass the legislative agenda. They do this in May now. She wondered if folks wanted to work on a proposal. She's working on a voter access proposal right now with Patrick Eckroth, Representation and Engagement Programs Director. Their agenda is a lot bigger than ASWWU's. Schaefer asked if the carbon tax ballot measure would be something they would put on the agenda. Kohout said she doesn't think so because this is for lobbying in the legislature. April 20th is the deadline for proposals. Heffelmire said she's going to do one with WSU for civic engagement. Kohout said she thinks Josie Ellison and Mayra Guizar are working on sexual violence prevention item.

VIII. Other Business

IX. Next Meeting Date

April 16,2015

X. Adjourn

The Meeting was adjourned at 5:32