



Western Washington University Associated Students  
**Legislative Affairs Council**

Monday January 9, 2017

5:30 PM VU 460

**Members:** *Present: Bryce Hammer (ASVP for Governmental Affairs), Nora Selander (AS Legislative Liaison), Rosa Rice-Pelepko (AS REP Organizing and Outreach Coordinator), Galen Herz (AS Local Issues Coordinator), Sarah Gallagher (Student at Large), Sofia Perry (Student at Large), and Lisa Rosenberg.*

*Absent: Ana Ramirez (Student at Large), Sofia Perry (Student at Large), Leanna Sauerlender (Student at Large), Peter Condyles (Student at Large), Katie VanDeWalker (Student at Large), Koyle Kendrick (Student at Large), and Lisa Rosenberg.*

**Secretary:** Cora Cole

**Guests :** Brandon Layne ( Student interested in joining)

**I. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

- a. There were not enough members for quorum so there was an informal meeting to give Galen feedback on the Housing research he did and to gather updates from Bryce and Nora. Nora was joined in through calling Bryce's phone and a google hangout because the conference phone was non-cooperative.  
The members then went around and introduced themselves with names, pronouns, and favorite class of the new quarter.

**II. DISCUSSION ITEMS.**

- a. **Legislative Update:** Nora reported she has been making alliances with groups in Olympia that line up with our agenda. Particularly there was a task force on sexual assault that had some important findings which the Council of Presidents has chosen not to act on. Michael Baumgartner from east side has been super interested in working on that though, Bryce asked what senators would be interested in sponsoring a bill, Nora said Baumgartner was unlikely but Ranker was a possibility. She is looking at recommendations that WSA put out for state need grant as well as our decoupling the S and A fee. State need grant wasn't on the governor's budget but she's meeting with other people who might be able to help with that in the legislature. Senators Billigs and Hunt are pushing pretty much everything that is on our agenda, including the Voting registration items. The Race and Equity is a watchdog group looking out for how bills that are introduced would affect marginalized groups. Bryce asked if Barbra Bailey would be willing to sponsor the Sexual Assault Survivors bill and

Nora said that she was no longer the head of the Higher Ed committee but she did introduce the bill that created the taskforce so she could look into it.

- b. **Local Agenda Campaign and Timeline Proposal:** Galen talked about the housing affordability history in Bellingham, including a lot of reports from the legal center involving landlord abuse and the zoning that segregates a lot of the town. There is a lot of research on the racial divide that effects that. The cost for buying a house in Bellingham is unusually high because of the housing shortage. He then went on to talk about policies that could combat those inequalities and some organization tactics for getting those policies passed. The best organized group of occupants of Bellingham are the NWcitizens who organize around “protecting the character of the neighborhoods” which largely comes out to making sure that the cost of living in the neighborhoods is high, and the cost of living there is also high. This largely realizes in heavy city council representation for wealthy white families at the cost of representation for students, low income families, and people without hereditary wealth and property (immigrant families and families of color particularly). Galen explained, the groups that work for more access to housing and the publicity of support for access to housing for everyone. Some of those groups are YIMBYs (Yes, In My Back Yard) who have a multi-part strategy for creating change around access to housing. Sarah then asked how election of city council members works, Galen said that anyone who is registered in Bellingham can vote but council members can only run if they are from a certain part of the city. The groups in Bellingham working on this issue are the Bellingham Tenants Union, The ASWWU Local Issues Team (which is pending approval by the board), and a handful of non-profits and council members. The committee took some time to discuss the format that LIT would take and how it would need to be formalized. Galen talked about the local issues LIT would deal with like, decriminalizing more than 3 roommates or increased support for homeless communities, and the ways that people would stay up to date on the issues, using a newsletter and ongoing presence with the City Council. Galen then asked for people’s thoughts on the LIT proposal. Rosa said she liked it and asked how close the timeline was to finalized, he said he was getting there but it is still pretty fluid. Sarah said that she was super interested in the collaboration points and was looking forward to it. Bryce said that she liked it but he definitely needs to figure out the bureaucratic side of things and create resolutions to pass through the AS Board. Brandon said that he liked the solution timeline. Nora added nothing but support.
- c. **ESC lobby day and Environmental Lobby Day Update:** Bryce met with the president’s council tonight and that is going swimmingly. She will be meeting with Anna soon to start writing the ELD agenda and the logistics of travel are underway as we speak. The budget for that will be voted on as soon as we next have quorum. The committee reviewed the Budget request and did not vote because of the absence of quorum. Bryce contemplated sending it out via electronic vote in the coming week so that those groups can progress as soon as possible.

### **III. REPORTS**

- A. Bryce** Reported that lobby day will be done soon. The ESC lobby day will include, Peer mentoring, academic advising, increased tutors and counselors, and support of college bound undocumented grade-schoolers, as well as QPOC advising staff, and increased support for disabled POC.
  
- B. Rosa** reported that she has been assisting Anna and the president's council with their lobby day organization as well as helping Nora to reach out to students who use State Need Grant for personal testimony. She has also been working on a speaker event with a political activist in communication with the SIRC followed by a workshop.