

A.S. STUDENT SENATE MEETING
May 20, 2008
VU 567

Present: Aaron Hayman, Brianne Kumar, Chelsea Fletcher, Danny Tonty, Diana Beilman, Kristina Mader, Lurdes Hernandez, Matteo Tamburini, Morgan Holmgren, Mark Provensano
Absent: Danny Tonty, Judah Corsini, Nicole Brown, Tyler Woodard, Sally McLaughlin
Advisor: Greg McBride
Secretary: Brooke Hayter
Guest: Erik Lowe, Annie Jansen , Devin Branson

Meeting called to order at 6:35 pm by Chelsea Fletcher

Summary of Motions:

I. Approval of Minutes – 5/13/08

Motion #025 -S- 08 to approve the minutes from 5/13/08, with noted revisions made by Brianne

Second: Sally

Vote?

Passed.

II. Revisions to the Agenda

III. Public Forum

IV. Information Items

a. Formal Recommendation - Matteo

Last week Matteo informed the Senators about the current election code, which states that you only need 33% plus one of the votes to be elected to the AS Board of Directors. The AS BOD reviews the software they use to do the elections. The formal recommendations states that they should consider, when they chose the software, that they should switch to a software that uses instant run off voting and that should they decide to chose such a software that the election code should be revised to reflect the fact that there would no longer be a need for 33% vote. Morgan wondered if Matteo had spoken with Ben Murphey about the resolution, he had not. The recommendation never calls for an instant run off election to be instigated. UW is currently using this software. It is currently more expensive and time consuming to use the system we had now, Nikki thought those figures should be included in the recommendation. The first therefore statement should state that we recommend that they purchase software that uses run off voting. This is going to be an action item next week.

V. Action Items

a. Transportation Fee

Brianne began the conversation by stating that she did not like the portion of the fee that said that hybrid cars would receive primary parking. Diana has spoken with a few students on campus about transportation, she stated that people felt very uneasy about the hybrid cars having primary parking, they were very interested in the Happy Valley go-line as those buses fill up very quickly. Aaron also spoke with a few people about cutting in half commuter parking, they have felt that this is a negative approach, once we get rid of this parking we will not get it back. Also finding parking for graduation will also be more difficult for families. They should approach this more differently than cutting down parking spots. Devin replied by saying for graduation or other day events, there will be plenty of parking when students are not on campus. He feels they should start by raising the prices of parking and then once people stop buying those passes they could begin to cut down on parking spaces. Other Senators felt that possibly putting in a parking garage would be most effective. Devin thought that because a parking garage is so expensive the price to park there would not only be astronomical, but people would stop using the parking garages and the University would have a very difficult time paying it off.

This fee leaves off a lot of specifics so that it can be flexible in the future. Point C under section 7 is very important to look at, one of the big issues is space for building, parking lots use up a lot of space and would free up a lot of space. Western is pretty much capped out with the amount of students they can hold, Western is building new dorms currently not out of need, if it ever does become a need, we will not have any space for the University to grow whereas if we were to get rid of the parking lots, it would free up a lot of space for Western to expand. Some Senators thought this was a good goal, but they did not think cutting out half of the parking was the best approach. We currently do not have an excess of parking, it is currently 1 parking space for every 17 spaces, if you include the park and rides, and it is 1 space for every 9 students. Rather than getting rid of parking spaces, we should look at how we can make transportation for students who live close to campus easier, which Senators felt the rest of the document does. According to Devin this document is probably going to expand over 20 years, and it is probably not anything we will ever see implemented while we are still attending school. Some Senators felt the fee should state, we are willing to give this to the students if the students are willing to give up their parking spaces. Parking is something this whole document would lead to, we are not talking about cutting all of this parking out tomorrow, and 10 to 12 years from now people will most likely not drive as much with the way things are shifting. This document is encouraging this trend. Sally mentioned that keeping these spaces protects the property value of Happy Valley, where an overflow of students already goes to park. Judah wondered if Western had any carpool parking arrangements on campus, they are currently not very well advertised, you can park in the lots near Fairhaven, you have to somehow prove that you are going to carpool every day, it should be promoted more. Some Senators felt the transportation committee should try to focus more on encouragement for sustainability and show less focus on what is being taken away from students. With gas prices, the committee felt that pricing is the only way that pricing is the only way that sustainability will ever happen on a larger scale to make a difference. At some point the number of students on Western's campus is going to bottom out, they feel like this is a tool to get less people to drive, and then students have to find an alternative way of coming to campus. Some of the Senators felt this was a negative tool, which needs to be reworded. Others felt that because people are still driving who don't necessarily need to that it hasn't bottomed out yet, and it is probably far from bottoming out. Other Senators felt that at some point you have to have some negative things to affect students when you are looking at sustainable issues. Not sure that it is wrong to say that the student body is going to have to sacrifice parking on campus in order to have a sustainable community, the rest of this document points out the changes that will be made because students are willing to sacrifice parking. Overflow is not because we don't have the spaces it is because of the spaces, the negative actions are not going to help that. They should be thinking of ways to be innovative and coming up with positive approaches, parking is the only piece of this document that they do not like. The Senators would like the committee to make small changes to this piece of the document.

Motion # 026 – S – 09 to send the document back to the transportation committee to consider amending section four number seven as was discussed during the meeting, made by Sally.

Second: Judah

Discussion: for cutting the parking spaces it is not saying that it is going to happen now, it is not going to happen for about 20 years, some Senators felt that because this was a goal the wording did not need to be changed. Western is trying to set a standard showing the student's commitments to sustainability. Using this as a tool to get where we want to go has a negative aspect. Sally changed her motion to state that the Senate endorses the entirety of the document other than section four number seven.

Vote: ?

Failed.

Motion # 027 – S – 09 to endorse the transportation fee without sections 4. 7 and 4.11, made by Tyler.

Second: Diana

Vote: ?

VI. Discussion Item

a. Counseling Health and Wellness

CHWS has approved the increase to \$70 per quarter. Diana wondered if the Senators had looked over the document and if they had any recommendations for her to take to the BOD tomorrow when they will vote on it. No Senators had any additional suggestions.

VII. Other Business

VIII. Senate Reports and Concerns

- a. Sally McLaughlin** has been rehired for the Recycle Center Educator next year. The recovery drive is also going to be happening soon, they recover everything students would have thrown away when moving out of the dorms and giving it to local charities. She has sent in information from the smoking forum to a volunteer for the Whatcom County Health Department, she is organizing a campaign to give to the Health Center. Next week she would like to vote on stopping sale of water bottles on campus. She wondered if more were needed to demonstrate a student consensus, she has about 80, Greg thought they needed about 300 to show student consensus.
- b. Lurdes Hernandez** Informed Senators about Law Advocates, a non-profit legal service in Bellingham, available for individuals or families who need legal advice. The phone number is 1-888-201-1014. Also on May 31st the Native American Student Union PowWow will have art and crafts, vendors etc. The event is free and goes from 1 – 7pm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm by Chelsea.