I. Big Red Barn Report: Kris Corda

K. Corda is the director of the Big Red Barn. She said that in order for renovations to occur, we need a detailed proposal of what the needs are. It needs to be approved by Dean Power and the Graduate School, then have an architectural plan commissioned.

K. Corda said we can have surveys to come up with what the graduate students want/need. She said it mainly depends on what graduate students want, which will determine whether or not renovations will be done.

J. Vertesi asked how big or much of a renovation it would be. K. Corda said it’s not up to her (it’s up to the students) however she would love to see an extension of Big Red Barn and have 2 floors throughout the building.

P. McPheron said we cannot use the College of AAP for plans; that’s not how Cornell works. He said we mainly need money.

A. Beggs said this is a good activity to keep in mind as goals for the future. If the Big Red Barn is renovated/extended, grad students can have good space for programs, meetings, conferences, etc.

II. Elections: 2 At-Large Assembly Seats

M. Berthoud from Astronomy and K. Siler from Sociology were nominated.

There were no objections to closing nominations. The assembly voted, M. Berthoud and K. Siler were elected to the At-Large Assembly Seats.

III. Grad Ball Update: Events Chair Janet Vertesi

J. Vertesi booked the Johnson Art Museum for the Ball. The Ball is April 15. She said they are looking for talent.

J. Vertesi said that she would like the tickets to be $10. 400-450 people can attend the ball, and if it reaches 600 they can open another floor to hold everyone.

J. Vertesi said she does not know if the open bar idea is still possible. There may just be 2 drink tickets. She said it depends on how much money there is and the sponsors.

IV. Introduction of forthcoming GPSA Resolution: Mike Schmidli (Rep., History)

Peter (?) of the Cornell Organization for Labor Action (COLA) said they want to present this resolution to inform graduate students about the program they are presenting, to get the GPSA’s support for this program, and to suggest to the administration that grad students are supportive of it.

Peter said that the program (Designated Supplier Program – DSP) is to ensure workers’ rights for the producers of Cornell apparel. Once Cornell endorses the program, apparel will be made according to the standards stated in the resolution. Cornell will also purchase apparel from factories in which people have these rights.

V. Report on the Graduate Housing Advisory Group: A. Beggs

A. Beggs gave a summary of how the housing issue came about and what has occurred to date.
A. Beggs said that our aim is to have the graduate housing advisory group assemble and to meet head administrators from campus life and to establish communication. It is a good way of ensuring that there will be regular communication before decisions are being made. She hopes the group will help create knowledge of this issue and establish clear communication between grad/prof students and the administrators in charge of residential decisions.

VI. Other Committee Reports
D. Mitarotonda talked about Board of Trustees. He said that the Student Life Committee and the Academic Affairs Committee recently met and discussed issues.

D. Mitarotonda said the group talked about wanting a university-wide non-academic requirement (similar to the undergrad swim test) concerning diversity (e.g., teach students how to talk about things/good communication). The current idea is to have freshmen in the spring semester to have a 13 week course, meeting once a week, which will be based on case studies, and discuss the issues.

D. Mitarotonda thinks it’s something important for grad students to think about, because they want professors or grad students to teach the sections. He would like feedback: e-mail dcm14.

Y. Yu had an update from the finance commission. She said we should let people know about events that are being sponsored. The Office of Assemblies thinks it’s a good idea to publicize the events; however it is not their job to do so. Y. Yu said that if the events are publicized, it will increase our welfare as graduate students. She said maybe we can come together with the events committee or other members of the GPSA. Y. Yu said that we need a person responsible to put events on the GPSA website, and have a list of events with sponsors.

Victoria suggested that it’s the organization’s own responsibility to publicize the event more. The GPSA can come up with more criteria concerning what the minimum publicity is in order to get funding.

A. Gelzer said the Student Library Advisory Committee is trying to change reserves/research search engine to be more like Google. She is trying to encourage more grad students to be part of it because it is all undergrad right now.

J. Vertesi gave a UA update. She said that they put together a transportation survey. Police/campus advisory protocol came to light after the stabbing; they are trying to initiate to look into how to manage the police during these cases. They are also working on redrafting charter.

VII. Open Forum
P. McPheron had a question on whether or not there has ever been a survey about how grad students find out information.

A. Beggs said that communication needs to be worked on.

Blake Jacquot from Hasbrouck said that they found out 2 weeks ago that campus life plans to put 30 undergrad seniors in apartments currently occupied by grad students and post docs. Campus life plans to move the grad students and post docs. Since then the plan has been changed, rather than displacing the people, undergrads will be diffused throughout Hasbrouck for year 1.

B. Jacquot said that for year 2, plans to have 270 undergrads in Hasbrouck, will take up over 30% of spaces. Therefore it will limit available housing to grad students. The undergrad will be put into the biggest apartments. Blake said there are no guarantees that no grad students will be displaced.

B. Jacquot said there is a newly formed Hasbrouck council. He said they hope to address advertising of apartments more aggressively to grad students.
B. Jacquot said initially the issue was undergrad students disrupting the grad students, now issue is whether it will sharply eliminate available apartments for graduate students.

VIII. Transportation & Parking Referendum Draft: T. McConnochie
T. McConnochie said he wanted to discuss the referendum before it is voted on. He decided that the best thing to do was to combine the referendum with a survey.

T. McConnochie said everybody gets the same survey. He described how the draft of the survey was created. T. McConnochie said that the survey has a dual purpose, for TCAT and the referendum as a result of the red buds agreement.

A. Gelzer expressed concern that there is no way people will complete a 45 question survey.

IX. Adjournment
A. Beggs adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

YuhLi Tsuei
Office of the Assemblies