

Student Assembly

Student Assembly of Cornell University

Minutes of the April 9, 2026 Meeting

4:45 PM – 6:30 PM

Robert Purcell Community Center 101 (RPCC 101-105)

- I. Call to Order
 - a. Z. deRham called the meeting to order at 4:48 PM.
 - b. *Members Present:* D. Addoquaye, A. Aftab, S. Agarwal, J. Anand, L. Blum, D. Carson, M. Causey, A. Cekic, C. Cook, Z. deRham, G. Dorward, M. Ehrlich, C. Flournoy, C. Kim, Y. Masoud, E. Porter, H. Spector, J. Swavy, C. Tarala, T. Waguespack, A. Walters, H. Watkins, E. Yao, K. Young
 - c. *Members Absent:* A. Fard, E. Galperin, I. Gayle, L. Han, V. Kakra, K. Krishtopa, J. Purcell, Z. Yabut
 - d. *Also Present:* K. Abebe, E. Chaudhuri, I. Gilenson

- II. Reading of the Land Acknowledgment
 - a. Z. deRham stated the land acknowledgement.
 - b. The meeting began with the swearing-in of the new member, A. Lyons.
 - c. The meeting continued with the swearing-in of the Director of Ethics, C. Carpenter.

- III. Approval of the March 5th, March 12th, March 19th , and March 26th 2026 Meeting Minutes
 - a. Z. deRham noted a clerical error on 3/19.
 - b. The motion to approve the minutes of March 5th, 12th, 19th, and 22nd, and 26th passed by a vote of 19-1-0.

- IV. Presentations
 - a. None.

- V. Communications to the Student Assembly
 - a. Z. deRham shared that Resolution 66 was approved on Monday.

- VI. Consent Calendar
 - a. None.



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VII. Reports of Officers, Committees, and Liaisons

- a. L. Blum shared that there will not be a meeting because she will be going to the SUNY conference, though hopefully they will be meeting in the upcoming week. She added that the committee is still working on Earth Day tabling in Ho Plaza and some progressive steps to get recycling in frats, to be implemented in the upcoming fall.
- b. T. Waguespack reported that the newsletter will be going up tomorrow.

VIII. Announcements

- a. Z. deRham introduced Trustee Paul Hayre, a former Student Assembly president.
- b. Z. deRham announced that they will be going to SUNY this weekend.

IX. Public Comment Microphone

- a. None.

X. Second Readings

- a. Resolution 67: Transferring Funds to the Multicultural Greek Fraternal Council
 - i. H. Watkins shared that the resolution was intended to move along with the student activity fee, but it ended up getting pushed back. He shared that Mgfc is an organization that's been talked about in the Student Assembly with concerns about how they track their finances but the money still went to organizations. The decision made by the Finance Committee was to disperse \$60,000 from the reserves to go into MGFC's account, equating to a little over \$2 from the student activity fee.
 - ii. H. Watkins motioned to amend lines 3 and 18 to change 40,000 to 60,000, no dissent.
 - iii. M. Ehrlich motioned to close debate, no dissent.
 - iv. The resolution moved to the Third Reading Calendar.
- b. Resolution 73: Calling for Cornell to Improve its Land Acknowledgement and Recognize the Benefits Obtained through the Morrill Act of 1862
 - i. R73 Appendix & Notes
 - ii. D. Carson shared that Cornell is a land grant institution, which means it benefited from the Morrill Act of 1862, which provided thousands of acres of indigenous lands to states as land parcels or to provide endowments for land-grant universities like Cornell. He added that the land that the grants



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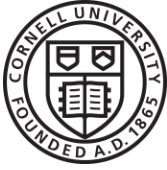
relied on were dispossessed of Indigenous lands that were often signed under coercion with little compensation for these groups. Cornell received a larger amount of financial benefit from the act than many other universities, around \$6 million, yet other peer land-grant institutions have done more than Cornell has done. Cornell has offered some courses about indigenous history of the institution, but there's a lot more that can be done. The resolution is to see what the administration has to say by recommending that they update their land acknowledgement, have some signage around Morrill Hall that gives more history, and to transfer 50% ownership of mineral rights to the Ojibwe.

- iii. Z. deRham moved the assembly into a discussion period, where they discussed Kotlikoff's previous comments, the importance of indigenous groups valuing and utilizing the land, Cornell's reasoning for maintaining the land, and the intent behind the resolution.
 - iv. Y. Masoud motioned to close debate, no dissent.
 - v. The resolution moved to the Third Reading Calendar.
- c. Resolution 77: Improving Communication from Housing & Residential Life to Students About Building-Wide Maintenance Issues
- i. J. Anand shared that the resolution asks for clear, standardized communication through sending a biweekly email of building maintenance status updates which would ease tensions and lessen their workload. He added that this could also be done on the housing portal or each dorm's website and would include a list of resolved, reported, and scheduled issues.
 - ii. E. Porter shared that a lot of resolutions have been focused on increasing accessibility of dorms, similar to this one.
 - iii. Z. deRham moved the assembly into a discussion period, where they discussed how this would lessen RA's workload and how the resolution would help address broken washing machines.
 - iv. C. Flournoy motioned to close debate, no dissent.
 - v. The resolution moved to the Third Reading Calendar.
- d. Resolution 78: Recommending an Adequate Provision of Course Information to Students Prior to Course Enrollment
- i. A. Walters shared that sometimes, there will be no syllabus available for the course, even when it's 9 weeks into the semester. He added that it's only fair for students to have access to some information to know what to expect.



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- ii. Z. deRham moved the assembly into a discussion period, where they discussed whether to add repercussions or allow students to get out of the course.
- iii. A. Cekic motions to amend the resolution in line 29 to add major written assignments, dissent.
 - 1. A. Cekic withdrew the amendment.
- iv. A. Cekic motioned to amend line 29 to say “plan preliminary examinations (prelims), midterms, major written assignments, projects, or tests of any kind;” no dissent.
- v. Z. deRham moved the assembly into a discussion period, where they discussed personal experiences getting professors to upload syllabi to the roster, changing syllabi and student consent, grade categories, exceptions with guest speakers, respecting the faculty, implementing an incentivization system, inviting the Faculty Senate, considering courses that have been taught in previous years.
- vi. A. Cekic motioned to close debate, no dissent.
- vii. The resolution moved to the Third Reading Calendar.
- e. Resolution 79: Consolidating Student Access to University Resources
 - i. D. Addoquaye shared that the resolution is a written communication between the Assembly and Technology Committee, which establishes a Student Assembly connection to the Department of IT. The resolution is about a bot that takes questions from students and posts answers, which was created because the school provides many resources but it’s buried under a lot of information, making it difficult to find. He added that a prototype has been made and that the Department of IT would like to see student support to expedite the process.
 - ii. C. Flournoy shared that mental health resources and finance resources are two common issues that people feel like they don’t have access to and don’t know much about.
 - iii. M. Ehrlich noted that T. Waguespack and K. Young left around half an hour into the meeting and encouraged members to stay for the meetings.
 - iv. Z. deRham moved the assembly into a discussion period, where they discussed current progress, how they plan to test the prototype to make sure it works in people’s preferences, joining Technology Committee, other specific websites being consolidated, how this link would be shared, this also



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being the Undergraduate Student Council's project, using the assembly's funds and resources, the resolution potentially being misleading, potentially building an app, the vagueness of the resolution, and update frequency.

- v. C. Tarala motioned to end debate, no dissent.
- vi. The resolution moved to the Third Reading Calendar.
- f. Resolution 80: Transferring Funds to Cornell Minds Matter for Light Up the Season
 - i. Z. deRham ceded the chair to C. Flournoy.
 - ii. Z. deRham shared that given the current allocation and costs to install lights, Cornell Minds Matter will need more money. She continued to share relevant details, such as CMM's contract with another company, use of labor, increasing materials and maintenance costs, and that they will give \$50,000 to see how things go.
 - iii. C. Flournoy moved the assembly into a discussion period, where they discussed expenses, how sustainable these funds are, and the importance of partnering with the byline organization.
 - iv. The chair smiled favorably upon a motion to extend meeting time.
 - v. M. Ehrlich motioned to extend the meeting time to 7PM, no dissent.
 - vi. A. Cekic motioned to close debate, no dissent.
 - vii. The resolution moved to the Third Reading Calendar.

XI. Third Readings

- a. Resolution 70: The Last Straw: Single-Use Plastic Phaseout
 - i. C. Flournoy ceded the chair back to Z. deRham.
 - ii. Z. deRham ceded the chair back to C. Flournoy.
 - iii. Representatives from Plastic Free Cornell and Skip The Lid shared that this is a phase-out resolution to ban single-use plastics on campus, highlighted its importance as Cornell claims to be a sustainable leader, and that Skip The Lid is a movement to give people the opportunity to skip a lid, track it, and determine how many lids they skipped turned into a carbon reduction.
 - iv. C. Flournoy moved the assembly into a Q&A period, where they expressed concerns about compostable plastics only being compostable in anaerobic digesters, talking to the waste manager or future student assembly members or other institutions, incorporating educational material as training for students, the fact compostable bins in dorms that don't get taken out with compost, and the money breakdown.



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- v. The chair smiled favorably upon the motion to close debate, no dissent.
- vi. The resolution passed by unanimous consent.

XII. Appointments and Vacancies Calendar

- a. H. Watkins appointed himself as the Chair of the Student Workers Committee, dissent.
 - i. H. Watkins shared that he's a student worker in the Brooks Student Service Office who talked to students on campus and noticed there are various employment things that aren't happening, such as services policies, and emphasized the need for more active policymaking regarding student employment on campus.
 - ii. M. Ehrlich motioned to close debate, no dissent.
 - iii. H. Watkins has been appointed as the Chair of the Student Workers Committee.
- b. C. Flournoy ceded the chair back to Z. deRham.
- c. C. Tarala asked to check attendance.
- d. The Chief of Staff read out the absence count of the assembly members.
- e. M. Ehrlich motioned to remove T. Waguespack from his position, dissent.
 - i. H. Spector motioned to extend the meeting to 7:15PM, dissent.
 - ii. The meeting was extended by a vote of 12-7.
 - iii. Z. deRham moved the assembly into a discussion period.
 - iv. M. Ehrlich motioned to close debate, dissent.
 - v. The motion to close debate passed by a vote of 13-4.
 - vi. The motion to passed by a vote of 13-6-1.
- f. Z. deRham motioned to enter Executive Session to conduct an internal election, no dissent.
- g. A. Walters was elected as the new Vice President of Communications.
- h. H. Spector motioned to unseat everyone over the attendance bar except C. Kim, no second.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sophia Lin
Clerk of the Assembly