



**Cornell University**  
**Student Assembly**

**Agenda – January 22, 2015**

**Cornell University Student Assembly**

**4:45pm – 6:30pm, Willard Straight Hall Memorial Room**

**I. Call to Order/Roll Call**

S. Balik called the meeting to order at 4:45pm

Members present: S. Ali Khan, B. Bacharach, S. Balik, J. Batista, Y. Bhandari, B. Brown, M. Chak, M. Henderson, E. Johnston, G. Kaufman, M. LaPointe, D. Li, L. Liu, E. Liu, R. Raglin, J. Selig, M. Stefanko, B. Sullivan, P. Titcomb, L. Wershaw, F. Yang, A. Zhou

Members excused: J. Fridman, M. Masson, D. Vakili

Members unexcused: L. Goldman, S. Tayal

**II. Oath of Office**

S. Balik let the new members in their oath of office

**III. Approval of the December 4, 2014 and December 5, 2014 Minutes**

Minutes approved by unanimous consent

**IV. Open Microphone**

None

**V. Business of the Day**

**R.39: Approval of the 2014-2015 Standing Rules – J. Batista**

Outreach events will be presented by Google Calendar. The penalty for not personally completing outreach requirements is having them assigned. Community members will be called upon to speak at the discretion of the chair.

**Call to question, seconded, approved by a vote of 22-0-0.**

**R.32: Appending the Referenda Process – J. Batista and D. Vakili**

**Motion to amend: strike lines 54 and 56**, because they want the referenda to take place during the election cycle.

**Call to question on the amendment, seconded, approved by a vote of 22-0-0.**

F. Yang asked who would determine the ‘neutral’-ness of questions on line 40. Response: They will be working with a department on campus that works with surveys and also with the Office of the Assemblies.

M. Battaglia asked if it would be better to change lines 53 and 55 to state that the deadlines would align with those of the elections period instead of naming explicit weekdays.

L. Liu asked if the referenda questions will strictly be yes or no questions, and also if the number of responses would be published along with the percentages for each answer. Response: They will definitely be yes or no questions, and the numbers will be published.

**Motion to amend:** strike lines 53 and 55, and have line 52 read: “The deadlines for submission of referendums will be a date to coincide with the deadlines of the election materials for the Fall and for the Spring.”

**Call to question on the amendment, seconded, approved by a vote of 22-0-0.**

P. Titcomb asked by the question would be yes or no as opposed to another kind of information gathering method. Response: It is the easiest way to propose a neutral question and it would be the best way to introduce this new policy.

G. Kaufman asked what checks are in place to prevent a small interest group, say the 10% to rally against the 90%. Response: That is a great question, but the hope is that that will not happen. That is a loophole in this new policy, but they are willing to take the risk to try it out.

K. Aniket recommended that infrastructure be put in place for validating signatures, as it would be an unfair burden to the Office of the Assemblies and the members of the election committee that would need to do that validating. Response: Brian Murphy created an online voting system, so all signatures will be validated electronically from now on.

M. Henderson mentioned that the time periods stated in the resolution don’t really make sense anymore with the previous amendments made and that it would be best to table this resolution so that any conflicts can be worked out.

M. Stefanko and M. Henderson stated their opinion that it shouldn’t be called a referendum. Response: Calling it a referendum gives more weight to the policy and also adds pressure to the SA to take action on the student response. Strictly speaking, the policy does follow the definition of a referendum.

**Motion to table until next week, seconded, approved by unanimous consent.**

**R.34: Media Consultation Partnership – L. Wershaw and Y. Bhandari**

The resolution calls for a partnership between Slope Media and the Communication Committee to create an event marketing media consultation guide for student organizations. The goal is to invite all student organizations to attend a forum at the beginning of each semester to present the marketing guide and the resources available.

L. Liu recommends that they talk to S. Tayal and M. Chak in order to work out presenting this forum at the Diversity and Outreach Bootcamp.

**Call to question, seconded, approved by a vote of 22-0-0.**

**R.36: Divestment from Coal: Toward a Sustainable Endowment – E. Johnston**

Max Weisbrod recommended striking the second whereas clause.

S. Ali Khan mentioned that a party was barred from speaking last year when a divestment issue was brought up. The SA shouldn't be listening to resolutions regarding world issues, and to be fair to all student organizations on campus, the SA shouldn't be listening to this one.

Multiple members stated a strong opinion for continuing discussion on the issue.

M. Battaglia mentioned his discomfort with the resolution. The purpose of the endowment is to return as much as it can, and it's unsettling to make a political statement about it, especially as it funds the university and affects student tuition. Response: To reiterate, this resolution is not telling the university to do anything that it isn't already doing. Cornell is missing out on a leadership opportunity.

M. Stefanko said that is unreasonable for the assembly to make statements about how the tuition will be affected, as there should be more research done into the coal industry before such a statement is made, and that most of the assembly likely doesn't understand how the university uses the endowment.

**Motion to table for two weeks, seconded, approved by a vote of 20-0-1.**

**VI. New Business**

**R.38: Toward Greater Legislative Accessibility – J. Fridman, M. Chak, E. Liu, B. Bacharach, G. Kaufman**

The resolution calls for a 25 word blurb to be submitted with each resolution, and that it be disseminated widely so that the student body can be made more aware of that the SA is working on.

L. Wershaw asked whose responsibility it would be to disseminate the blurbs. Response: The resolution implies that it would be the Executive Vice President, and they apologized for not making that explicit.

F. Yang mentioned that extra copies should be made electronically instead of using more paper.

**Motion to strike lines 23 and 24, seconded, dissent expressed:** there are always excess copies anyway that can be distributed, vote to vote: 3-17-0, **continuing discussion.**

**Motion to amend:** line 20 to read: “Be it resolved that a 10<sup>th</sup> rule be added to Section 2: Agenda Setting Policies and Procedures of the Standing Rules stating: “a short descriptive blurb of approximately 25 words will be submitted by sponsors of resolutions before committee approval.” **seconded, dissent expressed:** why not just make it two lines instead of approximately 25 words, vote to vote: 1-19-0, **discussion continues.**

**Call to question, seconded, dissent expressed,** vote to vote: 20-1-0, **voting continues: amendment passed by a vote of 20-0-0.**

**Motion to table until next week, seconded, approved by unanimous consent.**

S. Balik adjourned the meeting at 6:31pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chelsea Cheng