Cornell University
Student Assembly

Cornell University Student Assembly
Minutes of the Thursday, November 7th, 2019
Meeting, 4:45-5:37 pm in 701 Clark Hall

I. **Call to Order & Roll Call**
   a. J. Anderson called the meeting to order at 4:45 pm.
   b. Roll Call:
      i. Present: M. Adeghe, J. Anderson, M. Baker, C. Benedict, O. Egharevba, M. Haddad, C. Huang, J. Kroll, Y. Li, G. Martin, N. Matolka, I. Pavlov, T. Reuning, N. Watson, B. Weintraub, V. Xu, J. Youngblood, Y. Yuan
      ii. Absent: J. Feit (unexcused), L. Ordonez (excused), L. Smith (excused), K. Wondimu (excused)
      iii. Arrived After Roll Call: A. Cass (unexcused), U. Chukwukere (excused), J. Clancy (unexcused), P. Solovyeva (unexcused), S. Sun (unexcused), S. Xu (excused)

II. **Announcements**
   a. J. Anderson said that the meeting is not in its traditional setting of the Memorial Room today, and that this will be a one-time occurrence so that the audio issues in the Memorial Room can be worked out for the future. He added that those assembly members that speak quietly should project when they speak at this meeting, since there are no microphones in this room.
   b. C. Huang said that there will be Sprint Planning on Sunday, and that those members that cannot make it should let V. Xu know. She added that it will probably be in the same location as the last Sprint Planning.
   c. C. Benedict said that there are a couple of events coming in the near future including the Canandaigua Treaty Renewal, which is a treaty that exists between the United States and the Six Nations. He added that this would be taking place on Monday, November 11th, and that anyone interested in attending the renewal will be able to leave from a van at Akwe:kon at 10:00 am, which would return at around 6:00 pm.
   d. T. Reuning said that on Friday, November 15th, the Latinx community will be commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Latino Living Center and the 26th anniversary of the Day Hall takeover, which was organized by Latinx students in 1993. He added that the commemoration will begin at 4:15 at Day Hall, after which people will walk from there to the LLC, where the dean who organized the protest will be speaking.
   e. M. Haddad said that Humecathon will be happening next weekend, and that it is an event where people from all majors can come together to solve a policy problem, and that anyone interested in representing the SA at Humecathon should contact her.
   f. J. Anderson said that he is the chair of the SAFC Transformation Committee, and

that progress in the committee has been wonderful, and that his goal is to have an overview document by the end of the semester at the latest to outline the major changes that have been discussed in the committee. He added that following this, there will be presentations and focus groups, which will culminate in a fully-realized change to be sent to SAFC, and that anyone who hears anything about SAFC from their constituents or the community should let him know. He also said that there will be an executive session following this meeting.

III. **Open Microphone**
   a. No speakers at the open microphone.

IV. **Approval of the Minutes**
   a. October 31st Minutes
      i. B. Weintraub moved to amend the minutes such that the term "EOC" is replaced with "EEOC" wherever it occurs – amended.
      ii. J. Anderson moved to amend the minutes such that it is reflected that his motion to extend the meeting until 8:00 pm was approved – amended.
      iii. Motion to approve the October 31st minutes – approved.

V. **Byline Reports**
   a. Empathy, Assistance and Referral Service (EARS)
      i. M. Adeghe said that EARS is a counseling service that provides counseling six nights a week for several hours on each night, and that they are completely anonymous. She added that they had $1.50 in the prior byline cycle and asked for that amount again, which was granted. She also said that there was not much to say about this organization.
      ii. Motion to approve EARS' byline funding – approved 21-0-1.
   b. Cornell Minds Matter (CMM)
      i. M. Adeghe said that CMM provides support for people seeking mental health help, and that they are not counselors but they do help make life more comfortable for students on campus. She added that they have events in Willard Straight Hall every week, and that they wanted to go to a $2.50 funding amount to facilitate their becoming more of an umbrella organization for other mental health organizations on campus. She also said that there was not a lot of contention around this.
      ii. T. Reuning said that he knows that the voting in AppsCom is anonymous and asked if anyone would like to speak on why there was one person who voted no.
      iii. M. Adeghe said that she doesn't know who voted in that way or even whether or not that person is an SA member, but that she does remember that one of the things brought up in the discussion of the funding was that they did not have a structure or criteria set in place about how they plan on going about divvying up the $10,000 for co-sponsorships, and that they might have had that in mind when voting no. She added that their surplus was another thing that was slightly contentious, but that the advisor of the organization explained that she was new last year and was being particularly frugal as a result of that, and so they had a bit of a surplus. She also said that those two reasons against giving them $2.50 were probably those reflected in the vote of no.
      iv. Motion to approve CMM's byline funding – approved 21-0-1.
   c. Cornell Environmental Collaborative (ECO)

      i. M. Adeghe said that ECO is the umbrella organization for environmentally-focused groups on campus, and that they have about 20-plus organizations under them including some project teams and organizations centered around sustainability. She added that they were at $0.76 and wanted $1.00 to expand and have more people know about them and the community on campus that supports these missions. She also said that this was also not a super contentious vote, and that there was one no-vote, but that there is nothing that she can think of as to why that would be.

      ii. Motion to approve ECO's byline funding – <mark>approved</mark> 21-0-1.

VI.   New Business & Business of the Day

  a. Resolution 11: Approving Special Projects Request for Social Enterprise

      i. C. Huang presented the resolution.

      ii. J. Youngblood asked how much money is left in the SPF right now.

      iii. J. Anderson said that they are currently calculating that, but that they did giv themselves $70,000 from SAFC at the last meeting.

      iv. M. Adeghe said that any members who have projects related to their constituents, such as things said in their platform, are allowed to use SPF for these initiatives, and that they do have an extra $70,000 now.

      v. C. Huang said that she would discourage people who want retroactive funding for events that already happened from applying, but that they still may do so.

      vi. J. Anderson said that they will be transitioning the form for these applications to something that is supported by the Office of the Assemblies so as to be sustainable.

      vii. There was a motion to move Resolution 11 to Business of the Day – approved 21-0-1.

      viii. There was a motion to vote.

          1. G. Martin asked who the parliamentarian is.

          2. J. Anderson said that Deborah Nyakaru is, but that in her absence he is filling that role.

      ix. Motion to vote on Resolution 11 – <mark>approved</mark> 21-0-2.

  b. Resolution 12: Revising the Student Assembly Bylaws to Dictate that Community Votes be Conducted Online

      i. J. Kroll presented the background that prompted this resolution.

      ii. M. Haddad presented the changes that this resolution would make.

      iii. N. Watson asked how much time in advance people would be given to know about a coming vote.

      iv. M. Haddad said that it would normally be on a resolution that starts out as New Business and then is voted on a week later as Business of the Day, which would give about a week's time.

      v. J. Kroll said that it would fall upon the organizations looking to mobilize people to tell them when and where to vote.

      vi. N. Watson asked when they would therefore be sending the link.

      vii. M. Haddad said that they would not be sending it, and that it would instead be posted on the SA website.

      viii. C. Huang said that, to clarify for new members, they did have a very contentious vote last semester where people had to say out loud what their vote was, which made some students feel uncomfortable, and that as for her

question, she loves this idea, but that if they were to have a Sense-of-the-Body resolution, and only three people were in the audience that day, if they would still use the online method, or if the vote would be conducted in person.

ix. J. Kroll said that he doesn't think that it's particularly challenging to set up this online survey, and that it could be amended to have sponsors opt for in-person voting, but have online voting be the default.

x. M. Haddad said that a meeting with an audience of three people could still have people who couldn't show up but wanted to.

xi. I. Pavlov asked what the exact voting period would be, and how long the voting would be live.

xii. J. Kroll said that it would open at the beginning of the meeting, so that people could go to the livestream of the meeting and see what is going on.

xiii. B. Weintraub said that if this were to be made the case, then there should be no option to opt out of the online voting, and that he could see a group who can get a lot of members out to vote on a resolution that might be combative.

xiv. J. Kroll said that he suggested opting out in passing and that he now sees that it might not be a good idea.

xv. B. Weintraub asked if they have the tech capacity to do this.

xvi. M. Haddad said that this was discussed with the OA, and that based on what they told them, this should be feasible.

xvii. M. Baker said that she is not challenging this resolution and will vote in favor of it, and asked if a person can change their mind once their vote, such as if they change their mind while watching the discussion.

xviii. J. Kroll said that that is a good question.

xix. M. Haddad said that she does not believe that they can.

xx. Discussion continued in this regard.

xxi. J. Clancy said that he agrees with B. Weintraub's point in needing consistency on this, and that he also thinks that they might want to bear on the side of stating that there is a livestream to watch and then make one decision, which will make it less logistically challenging.

xxii. T. Reuning said that his one concern is the language specifying Qualtrics, and that that might be the system now, but that Cornell might change it down the line. He added that they maybe should instead mention a "secure survey" without specifying "Qualtrics".

xxiii. J. Kroll said that that is definitely something to consider, and that they like Qualtrics because they can track the votes.

xxiv. O. Egharevba asked what the protocol would be if they decide to change a resolution to Sense-of-the-Body during the meeting, and if this online system would be set ahead of time.

xxv. J. Kroll said that it's not congruent with the bylaws for such a change to happen, and that if it were, the vote would occur at the following meeting, which gives the parliamentarian and the clerk time to set that up.

xxvi. N. Watson asked if SA members can vote in the community vote, and how they plan on stopping members from signing on to the online vote and voting if they cannot.

xxvii. J. Anderson explained the voting process.

xxviii. N. Watson asked how they will stop them from voting.

xxix. Discussion continued in this regard.

xxx. I. Pavlov said that she thinks it would be great if there were a way to mark SA members as separate, and that she disagrees that a community member's vote should be binding, and that if they have the technological capacity to allow people to change their votes, they should have that, and that if there can be a button to edit or reverse the vote, that should be possible.

xxxi. M. Baker said that, if there is no way to do that, there should be a popup before their vote that says that the vote is binding.

xxxii. V. Xu asked why they don't just open it in the period in which they are voting, so that they will have watched the livestream or otherwise have their opinion in mind.

xxxiii. J. Kroll said that part of the problem is that how little time that is, and that a four-minute window might be problematic. He added that technically, the vote should be conducted before the SA votes so that the community vote can be announced.

xxxiv. M. Haddad said that there are also prelims on Thursday nights.

xxxv. M. Adeghe asked what prelims have to do with this issue.

xxxvi. J. Kroll said that it might be stressful to have to keep checking for when the vote goes live.

xxxvii. Y. Yuan said that in thinking about last semester's BDS vote, the wi-fi service in Willard Straight Hall would have been jammed if an online vote were held at that time, and so he would prefer that they can start the vote earlier than SA voting.

xxxviii. J. Kroll said that the idea is to start the voting when the meeting starts and end it before the SA voting, and that he thinks that the wi-fi would be less of a problem than the website server itself.

xxxix. G. Martin said that he doesn't think that this is the perfect model for accessibility, but that it is opening it up.

xl. M. Adeghe said that she supposes that she just didn't understand that the point was about wi-fi, and that the point is that not everyone has to be there at the time of the vote so it probably wouldn't be affected. She added that she supposes that she understands the concern about the prelims, but that she doesn't think that it makes much sense, but that this opens up accessibility more than it hurts it.

xli. Discussion continued in this regard.

xlii. B. Weintraub said that he thinks that they should try to make the voting multiple hours, and that 4 minutes is problematic, and asked what would happen if they open the meeting at 4:45 but then vote on the relevant resolution at 5:05. He added that he knows that this presents some problems, and asked what would happen if they opened the vote the morning of the meeting so that they ensure that there is a larger block of time, and then close the voting at 4:45. He also said that if they close it at 4:45 they would not hear the discussion, and that he thinks that the discussion of the variable end time could pose issues because that's generally not how voting works, so they should figure it out.

xliii. J. Kroll said that their current goal is to keep it as close to the current process as possible, and that if an issue is so polarizing that a significant number of

undergraduate students take interest in it, the discussion of it probably won't last under an hour.

xliv. M. Haddad said that the community votes are conducted during the meeting so that they can listen to what is going on at the meeting.

xlv. G. Martin asked if they will have access to what the community vote is before they vote.

xlvi. J. Kroll replied in the affirmative, and said that the vote is revealed before the SA votes, but that this did not happen at the BDS vote last semester.

xlvii. A. Cass said that they wanted to comment on the concern raised about when to start the voting, and that they could understand if they wanted to set an amount of time that people should vote, but that they do not think that a provision like that would be necessary, but that it couldn't hurt.

xlviii. J. Clancy said that he agrees that these community votes do not occur very often, but that they do need to be prepared for the eventuality that these things do come up, and that they have a process to deal with it, and so the thinks that going into the morning is a bit much, but having an absentee ballot to start at noon and end early would be good. He added that he thinks that starting in the morning is too much time, but starting at the meeting is too little, and that he thinks that there is some value in setting a hard deadline for voting. He also said that he is not entirely sure about how fast Qualtrics can do what it needs to do, and if the discussion ends early, they can recess, wait for the community vote, and then vote as an assembly.

xlix. J. Kroll said that they are not ignoring the fact that this will happen in the context of contentious cases, and that this was designed for those cases, and that he thinks that they would love to extend the voting for as long as possible, but that it would turn into a gray area of a community vote vs a referendum. He added that, to keep to bylaws as closely as possible, they have to open voting up at the start of the meeting and close it at the close of debate, but that this would likely be an hour or two. He also said that he thinks that this system is imperfect, but that it does eliminate a lot of the accessibility issues.

l. T. Reuning said that he agrees with the concerns about variable end times, but that exists with the current system in the first place, and that he had to run to vote in the BDS resolution last year. He added that it's an issues that exists anyway, and that it's not a perfect system, but it is more accessible than the current one, which is what they should be moving toward.

li. Ian Wallace said that another thing to consider is that typically, when a resolution is introduced, it is in New Business, and that such resolutions are often moved to Business of the Day on the day they're introduced and then are voted on that day, and so there might be issues there. He added that in cases of the regular procedure being followed, people would have access to the discussion of the prior week.

lii. M. Adeghe said that she wanted to echo what T. Reuning said about variable end times being a big concern, and that she doesn't know if there's any way to fix that, and that with this style of vote, there will always be a variable end time unless they decide to set one.

liii. J. Kroll said that if groups understand that there might not be a debate going in and that voting would therefore happen early, it might encourage fostering

debate to give people more time.

    liv. V. Xu said that she wanted to go back to the point M. Baker brought up about it not being possible to submit multiple time, and that she thinks that considering the timing issues, she doesn't think it's necessary to start a few hours earlier, and that if people are interested, they can watch the video. She added that a disclaimer should be included to make it very clear that this is the only time a vote can be cast, such that there is no confusion.

    lv. B. Weintraub moved to table the resolution.

        1. The motion was withdrawn.

    lvi. I. Pavlov said that she thinks that it needs to be open at the start of the meeting and not before that because it enters the gray area of referendum vs community vote, and that as G. Martin said, they are not trying to create a perfect model because that is a wholly different thing. She added that they are making the current model more accessible, and that she does think that people should be able to change their votes if it is within their technological means.

    lvii. B. Weintraub moved to table Resolution 12 – tabled 23-0-1.

  c. Resolution 13: Creating an ad-hoc Committee for PFC Transformation

    i. J. Anderson presented the resolution.

    ii. Motion to move the resolution to Business of the Day – approved 23-0-1.

    iii. Motion to vote on Resolution 13 – approved 23-0-1.

VII. Executive Session

  a. J. Anderson moved the meeting to executive session at 5:37 pm.

VIII. Adjournment

Respectfully Submitted,
John Hannan
Clerk of the Assembly