



# Cornell University Student Assembly

## Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, November 5, 2015 Meeting  
4:45pm-6:30pm in Willard Straight Hall Memorial Room

### I. Call to Order (J. Batista)

- J. Batista called the meeting to order at 4:47pm
- *Present at the Roll Call:* B. Bacharach [2]; J. Batistia [0]; L. Bushner [2.5]; M. Chak [1.5]; S. Chaudhary [2]; J. Chessin [0.5]; V. Devatha [1]; R. Dunbar [1.5]; R. Gupta [4]; E. Johnston [0.5]; S. Karnavat [2]; M. Kasher [0]; G. Kaufman [0]; C. Li [2.5]; D. Li [3.5]; D. Liu [0]; M. McBride [0]; P. Russell [0]; J. Selig [2.5]; M. Stefanko [3]; S. Tayal [3]; P. Titcomb [3]; K. Zhu [2]
- *Not Present at the Roll Call:* M. Ghandour (Unexcused) [4]; E. Liu (Excused) [4]; V. Michel (Excused) [2]; R. Uttamchandani (Excused) [4.5];

### II. Approval of the Meeting Minutes (J. Batista)

- The minutes of October 29, 2015 were approved by unanimous consent.

### III. Open Microphone (E. Johnston)

### IV. Announcements and Reports

- Movember & Student Health Plan Advisory Committee – UA Representative M. Indimine announced that the Student Assembly was sponsoring November as a month dedicated to promoting men's health under the name "Movemeber". More information could be found at [Movember.com](http://Movember.com).
- 6.4 – President Batista requested that Assembly members follow up with Ulysses Smith or Carol Grumbach regarding Policy 6.4. She also announced that the JA search was underway, and that the Assembly would be sending out a poll asking students what characteristics they would like to see in Cornell's next Judicial Administrator. J. Batista Finally announced E. Johnston and herself would be adding a new part to Thursday meetings called Initiatives, which will grant representatives the chance to share and get feedback on what they are working on.
- UA, CJC – G. Kaufman stated the previous chair of the CJC resigned, and that he would be the interim chair until a new one can be found.

- Campus Planning Committee – E. Johnston announced that she attended the Campus Planning Committee’s meeting last week and that she wanted feedback herself on ideas for a new plan to revitalize Collegetown.

## V. Business of the Day

- Byline Report: Cornell Concert Commission
  - M. Stefanko announced that Cornell Concert Commission requested \$12.00. The Appropriations Committee believed there was room for improvement with events that undersell, but the Committee ultimately concurred at \$12.00.
  - There was a motion to **Call the Question**. The Byline Funding was **adopted** by the Assembly by a vote of 22-0-0.
- Byline Report: Slope Day Programming Board
  - M. Stefanko stated that Slope Day Programming Board requested \$7.50. The Appropriations Committee believed that this was a realistic amount given the 16,000-19,000 attendees they receive annually.
  - There was a motion to **Call the Question**. The Byline Funding was **adopted** by the Assembly by a vote of 23-0-0.
- Byline Report: Cornell University Programming Board
  - M. Stefanko announced that CUPB requested \$18.00. Given the organizations record of selling out every show from the past year, the Appropriations Committee agreed to this amount.
  - There was a motion to **Call the Question**. The Byline Funding was **adopted** by the Assembly by a vote of 23-0-0.
- There was a motion to suspend the agenda and move Resolution 22 to business of the day and the next order of business. The motion was adopted by a vote of 23-0-0.
- Resolution 22: Developing and Funding Anabel’s Student-Run Grocery (E. Johnston, M. Stefanko)
  - E. Johnston, M. Stefanko, Elizabeth (Lizzi) Gorman ’17, and Nicholas Karavolias ’17 presented on the details of the resolution.
  - E. Johnston stated that food security on campus revolved around food access, food availability, and usability.
  - M. Stefanko stated last year’s Pulse Survey found that 22% of students were food insecure and that this resolution hopes to address the issue through more than just conversation.

- E. Johnston stated Anabel's grocery store hopes to establish a subsidy program. The 626 Food Pantry was currently the only organized aid for food insecure students on campus, but this area can be stigmatizing, leaving students to get food late at night or early in the morning. Additionally, through a food day presentation, a food security panel, and educational cooking presentations, the sponsors hoped to solve this campus wide issue.
- M. Stefanko stated Cornell could have a program like Georgetown. He believed there would be a high probability of success because the costs of rent and utilities would not exist, and local farm food groups could supply the store. He declared Georgetown makes between two to three million dollars in revenue each year.
- E. Johnston mentioned architecture students designed the building plan, and that four distributors would be used, similar to those used for Cornell Dining.
- M. Stefanko announced newly estimated renovation costs would be around \$135,000, instead of the \$240,000 originally predicted.
- R. Dunbar stated his only concern with this resolution was over the initial funding coming from the Student's Helping Student's Fund.
- Billy Bristow addressed the Assembly in support of the resolution on behalf of the Cornell Democrats.
- Lizzi Gorman '18 a CALS student introduced herself and mentioned that accessibility of food on campus was a large concern.
- Nicholas Karavolias '18 also a CALS student introduced himself and expressed his experiences working on outreach programs for the grocery store.
- J. Chessin asked three questions: What were the sponsor's previous experiences, why couldn't money be used from the Assembly's Infrastructure Fund, and how would the business run.
- Rene Alexander Associate Dean and Director of Intercultural Programs stated that the \$180,000 from the SHS Fund would be a small price to pay to help solve food insecurity on campus. She opened the 626 Food Pantry - noting the fact that Collegetown was a food desert - through donations from alumni and departmental funds, but realized this was not a long-term solution.
- M. Stefanko stated that Cornell was behind on the issue of food security. He mentioned that long-term viability should not be concerning, noting Georgetown operates 8 different stores.
- G. Kaufman motioned to amend line 74 and 75 to read, "...Review Committee and two internally elected Student Assembly representatives be placed on the *Executive Board* of the Student Run Grocery Store as voting members with full privileges;"

- There was a motion to vote.
- The assembly **amended** the resolution by a vote of 22-0-0.
- M. McBride stated that he planned to vote no on the resolution. With financial responsibility going to outside sources, Greenstar building a new store in Collegetown (while offering student subsidies), and the Financial Aid Office opposed to this decision, he believed the money could be better spent. He iterated that the goal of the Students Helping Students Fund was not infrastructure development, and that alternative programs should be considered.
- Laurel Maffot, Chair of the Assembly Dining Committee, asserted that after talking to representatives from Columbia and Cornell's meal programs, Cornell currently does not have the technology to implement a meal swipe system to help students. She also brought up the idea of a better bus schedule for off campus grocery shopping, but stated that these stores are burdensome to get to. Similarly Greenstar's prices, and model of cooperative membership do not work for most student's busy schedules.
- E. Johnston stated that the Collegiate Readership Program was an outside funded group, and that the board would have to partner with CTA if they hoped to keep this project going after M. Stefanko and herself graduated.
- Nicholas Karavolias '17 stated that Columbia's Shared Meal Swipe system raised the cost of their dining plan.
- M. Stefanko encouraged those with dissention to look at the full picture of the resolution and ways to address student's issues regarding food insecurity.
- B. Bacharach declared the Assembly's Financial Aid Committee decided to table Resolution 22 until Sunday. He mentioned that one member, Syrus Zeldon, was not informed about this schedule change, and thus was not counted in the final vote. He was given the opportunity to proxy vote.
- Alex Leto '16 the executive coordinator for programming and community engagement of Anabel's Grocery Store mentioned this resolution would teach students how to cook and give access to foods they could conveniently make.
- S. Chaunday stated that this resolution would certainly solve food insecurity, but he was concerned over the value of the store. He announced on behalf of the Muslim community, "As a community we would prefer the store to sell items mirroring Greenstar café – more vegetarian friendly. Between the Muslim Community and the Jewish, which may have a similar issue with pork being sold, it is preferable to avoid pork and bacon."

- Nicholas Karavolias '18 stated in regards to the cultural sensitivity of produce for sale they plan to offer a wide variety of vegetarian options, and that further discussion could occur later on.
- M. Stefanko stated this was the first time they had heard this concern.
- P. Russell asked if there were any bigger issues with 626's Food Pantry and if there would be an issue with just expanding this.
- Rob Hendricks '17 stated he had been working alongside M. Stefanko for six months. During this time he had become food insecure, and despite this, he hopes the work put in would help secure others as well as himself in the future.
- Lizzy Gorman stated that related to the Food Pantry, most people are unaware that it exists. The pantry also stocks extremely limited options.
- V. Devatha stated that because of Hinduism he is personally restricted in food options, but would still be in favor of the store providing all types of food.
- Zack Praiss '16 asked how food insecurity could best be addressed. He saw Anabel's Grocery Store as the best solution.
- Nicholas Karavolias stated Anabel's Director of Purchasing was an active member of the local agricultural community, and clarified that Cortland Produce and other distributors would be used.
- M. Stefanko stated Greenstar served a more wealthy demographic. He expressed optimism over the fact that as long as the store operated at less than a 30% markup they would not have to worry about competing in costs to other stores.
- M. Ghandour stated that with 22% of students facing food insecurity, and only 21.3% of the SHS Fund being used, this proposal would be worth the costs.
- Julia Montejo '16 stated that the sponsors should look closer at Greenstar's subsidy, or Flower Program. She also reiterated the issues concerning religious groups.
- E. Johnston stated Greenstar's Flower Program requires that a student be on SNAP (U.S. Food Stamps), while still not saving the recipient a great amount. She brought up that only 6% of college students are on government food security programs because the process of eligibility is exhaustive.
- M. Battaglia asked about the proposed changes in this resolution that differ from the resolution returned last years by President Emeritus Skorton. He also asked about the logistics of fundraising and the potential benefits of using Cornell's entrepreneur program.
- Richard Wang '18 put together Anabel's business projections. He proclaimed Anabel's model was more sound than those used by some corporate grocery

stores. Given the benefits of not having fixed costs, the store would only have to make \$2,000 a month to be profitable.

- M. Stefanko stated that last April he spoke to the entrepreneur program, and additionally the head of Life Changing Labs was a board member.
- J. Selig stated that he would not be voting do to a conflict of interest. He asked where Georgetown originally got their funding from.
- M. Stefanko stated Georgetown's grocery store opened in a similar fashion with help from their student government 40 years ago.
- Ben Kennet raised the point that extra revenue from fundraising (\$100,000) was not addressed. He also asked why the business plan was released only two days prior.
- M. Stefanko stated that major parts of the business plan were established over a year ago.
- Nelson Billington stated that by December a crowd funding campaign through Cornell's fundraising platform would occur, and they would also target alumni.
- D. Li believed the problem of food insecurity needed to be addressed through projects like the one proposed.
- There was a motion to **Call the Question**.
- There was dissent.
- S. Tayal stated that not enough dialogue had occurred, and that there were still questions needing to be addressed.
- The motion to vote **failed** by a vote of 12-11-0.
- Samir Durvasula '17 stated that without Hindu representation on the board he was concerned over how the discussion of food choices would occur.
- M. Stefanko stated the produce choice had not been made, he additionally claimed the resolution did not need more discussion, as the similar grocery resolution last year passed by a vote 18-4-1.
- There was a **Point of Order**.
- There was a **Point of Information** regarding the history of the previous grocery store resolution passed by the Assembly.
- M. Stefanko answered that he believed President Emeritus Skorton pushed the issue forward to Cornell's next administration.
- M. Chak proclaimed that attacking the resolution while not giving new ideas was undermining those facing food insecurity.
- Michael Ferrer expressed approval for the resolution, and clarified that alongside with Michala Litman he had discussed the potential of working with

Greenstar, but that Greenstar was not focused on supporting food insecure students at the time.

- There was a motion to Call the Question.
- There was dissent.
- S. Tayal stated that there had not been meaningful conversation.
- The motion to vote failed by a vote of 12-11-0.
- There was a motion to extend the meeting to 7:00pm
- The motion was adopted by a vote of 23-0-0.
- Millie Kastenbaum '16 indicated that she was in support of Resolution 22 despite the debate over receiving funding from the Student's Helping Students fund.
- M. Stefanko stated that \$140,000 from the SHS Fund would only be worth a handful of A&S or AAP student internships. This money could instead go to feeding students in dire situations.
- Lizzy Gorman stated that even with a loss of \$140,000 the emergency funding would still exist, and the internship program would still be strong.
- P. Titcomb stated that the discussion of class needs to begin around campus and this grocery store helps to address the issue.
- There was a motion to Call the Question.
- The resolution was adopted by the assembly by a vote of 14-9-2.

J. Batista adjourned the meeting to Executive Session at 6:42pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter Biedenweg

Assembly Clerk, Office of the Assemblies