



Cornell University Student Assembly

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Minutes of the Thursday, February 18th, 2016 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 4:45pm
- *Present at the Roll Call:* B. Bacharach [4.5]; J. Batista [1]; S. Chadhaury [2.5]; J. Chessin [1.5]; V. Devatha [4.5]; R. Dunbar [3.5]; R. Gupta [2.5]; E. Johnston [1]; S. Karnavat [4]; M. Kasher [0]; G. Kaufman [0]; C. Li [4.5]; D. Li [4.5]; M. McBride [0]; V. Michel [2]; M. Stefanko [5]; S. Tayal [4.5]; K. Zhu [3]
- *Not Present at the Roll Call:* M. Chak (Unexcused) [4]; M. Ghandour (Unexcused) [5]; D. Liu (Excused) [0]; P. Russell (Excused) [1.5]; J. Selig (Unexcused) [3];

II. Announcements and Reports

- Director of Elections: Special Elections - M. Henderson stated the results of the Student Assembly Special Election would be released via the Office of Assemblies website in the coming days.
- SAIFC – M. Kasher updated the Assembly on the status of the Infrastructure Fund. She stated they had accepted four non-assembly members but are still looking for a fifth. Proposals for new vending machines in Sibley Hall and garbage cans on North Campus were approved through outside sources. Lastly, she expressed that the SAIFC would announce its final decisions in the future.

III. Forum: Questions and Answers with VP Ryan Lombardi

- VP Lombardi stated that Dean Hubbell was stepping down as Dean of Students to serve as a faculty member in the College of AAP. Lombardi wanted to hear student input and suggestions on the selection of the next DOS.
 - M. Stefanko asked that the Dean of Students be a student advocate, he also wondered if the search would include new structures and roles for the DOS.
 - VP Lombardi wanted to complete the search through a holistic frame and was in favor of an active and open DOS. He wanted to see where opportunities would lie in terms of restructuring the campus.
 - Jevan Hutson '16 suggested the Dean of Students be from a student service field, not from the Cornell faculty, and stressed the importance of a nationwide search.
 - Eleanor Reppy '17 requested someone from a diverse background who was aware of all student concerns. She stated that such people from a more student advocacy, or services background would be beneficial.
 - S. Tayal wanted to discuss the possibility of ____

- M. McBride wanted a DOS who was from outside of the university, who could go against the grain of standard practices at the University.
- Julia Montejo '17 wanted the search prioritized for students, especially those from marginalized groups. She wanted someone aware of advocacy, arriving from a school that had a history of implementation of advocacy solutions.
- John Goldstein was a student who identified as disabled. He felt that the diversity perspective was not advocated far enough on campus, and requested that a leader with experience in issues focused on diversity, beyond the standard aspects, was a necessity.
- J. Berger requested VP Lombardi hold additional opportunities for input beyond this single forum.
- VP Lombardi stated that a search committee would narrow the process, but as students were similarly involved in his own hiring process, he wanted students to have a chance to talk again to potential candidates directly.
- Kartik Ramkumar '16 believed a DOS from outside of the University would be able to give new ideas and reinvigorate certain groups and offices around campus.
- J. Chessin wanted the new Dean to be open to holding talks with students.
- D. Li wanted an advocate on behalf of departments of ethnicity.
- VP Lombardi stated that he nor the Dean would have a role over faculty hiring.
- Ejebmia Dema '18 wanted to see a DOS that had the emotional ability and intelligence to look at ways of solving all issues around campus, no matter who they were.
- Ex-Officio Representative Nolani Gabriel believed that someone with cross-cultural exchange would be good, as well someone not afraid to be involved, such as Renee Alexander.
- Y. Bhandari wanted to know about the timeline on this issue, to make sure that enough time in the semester was left for a smart choice.
- VP Lombardi stated that because it was his first year on campus, he was starting the search later than he would have liked. Despite the timeline being crunched, he wanted to make sure the decision was right. If the decision were not made by the summer, he proclaimed that he would hold off the decision until the fall of 2017 to keep students involved.
- M. Ghandour asked if VP Lombardi wanted a DOS that was involved in action.
- VP Lombardi stated that having flexibility was key for selecting the best advocate for students.
- E. Johnston wanted to know if the restructuring process was intended to occur before a new Dean was hired.
- VP Lombardi stated that restructuring was mostly focused on people. He wanted to be thoughtful of the professional nature of the job, allowing for individual discussions of roles once the DOS was hired. He was also open to comments and recommendations.
- M. Stefanko wanted to ask if an outside firm was hired for the search, or if there were other ways to search for candidates. He stressed that student's needs should be above the recommendations of a job search firm.
- VP Lombardi stated that he would be using a firm to search, but that he was behind M. Stefanko recommendation of putting student's needs first.

III. Open Microphone

- Dale Barbaria recited the Oath of Office.

IV. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

- The minutes of February 11th were approved by unanimous consent.

V. Business of the Day.

- There was a motion to move Resolution 39 to the top of the agenda.

VII. New Business

- Resolution 39: Committing to Carbon Neutrality by 2035
 - E. Johnston stated that the goal of Resolution 39 was to to reinstate Cornell's commitment of carbon neutrality by 2035. She stated sustainability plans would have long term benefits, and hoped President Garrett would approve of the carbon neutrality plan.
 - Emily Dong '18 stressed the goals of carbon neutrality set by President Skorton.
 - M. Stefanko wanted to question the goals of this resolution. Given the past history with the administration, he suggested the sponsors move ahead even without the resolution.
 - E. Johnston believed that the resolution was a way to understand student's desires. She believed Cornell's goals should focus on sustainability especially considering Cornell's early choice compared to other universities in proclaiming carbon neutrality.
 - A community member believed that the history of Cornell advocacy groups was a good example of the work done by students. He believed a hard number (2035) pushed people to action. Additionally, given New York's commitment to divest from coal by 2020, it seemed a better time than ever for Cornell to involve itself in environmental policy.
 - M. Battaglia expressed that President Garrett, in a fall University Assembly meeting, proclaimed that 2035 would be a soft target. This went in opposition to President Emeritus Skorton's hard-line goal of 2035. He stated the UA would soon be voting on a resolution looking at the true cost of carbon neutrality by 2035.
 - Emily Dong believed that a pilot study would cost \$20 to \$30 million.
 - There was a motion to move Resolution 39 to Business of the Day.
 - By unanimous consent the motion was adopted.
 - S. Chaudhary asked what steps Cornell begun taking after President Emeritus Skorton announced Cornell's carbon neutrality goals in 2007.
 - Elizabeth Chi '18 expressed that a Carbon Plan was established in 2009, which included building a solar farm and using lake source cooling facility.
 - There was a motion to Call the Question.
 - By a vote of 22-0-0 Resolution 39 was adopted with two community votes in the affirmative.

VIII. Initiatives

- Quarter System Review Committee
 - The sponsors presented data about the possible implementation of a Quarter System Structure for Cornell's Greek system. Greek life is around 30% of the Cornell population. They believed that Cornell had the best Judicial System of all peer institutions, but wanted to make sure the campus was safer. Their data suggested a majority of parties were held in Collegetown, and to mitigate the risks associated with

- this, they hoped to bring back more supervised events.
- Under the system Quarter One would involve no contact between chapters and freshmen. Quarter Two would involve chapters hosting non-alcoholic events. Quarter Three would involve alcohol and hazing free formal recruitment, and Quarter Four would involve formal initiation.
 - M. Battaglia asked about the sponsors collaboration with administrators.
 - The sponsors talked about how the policy was grounded in a resolution passed by the Student Assembly, and how they were continuing to receive student, alumni, and administrative input.
 - E. Johnston asked about the effects of the Good Samaritan policy, and if they were shown to have any offsetting results.
 - The sponsors discussed the benefit of sharing with chapters how the Good Samaritan policy was fully enforced, and its potential advantages.
 - James Alvarez asked about the recruitment process, and how it might change related to diversity.
 - The IFC Chairman Travis stated that the quarter system allowed for more in depth interactions prior to recruitment, which could help with inclusion. He stated that the system was not a new set of policies, but rather is a collection of code and laws which follows how chapters manage themselves and manages how the campus can remain safe.
 - The sponsors acknowledged a major goal of the IFC was to reduce drinking as much as possible, yet understood there was more work to be done.
 - Jill Sullivan wanted to promote the use of Cayuga Watches and asked about additional training.
 - The sponsors stated that training was a beneficial step and would work on increasing its abilities, but also mentioned that with Quarters One, Two, and Three having more supervised social events, the final quarter was more contained and did not raise red flags.

J. Battista adjourned the meeting at 6:36pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter F. Biedenweg

Assembly Clerk, Office of the Assemblies