



Cornell University Student Assembly

Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, April 14th, 2016 Meeting
4:45pm-6:30pm in Willard Straight Hall Memorial Room

I. Call to Order (J. Batista)

- E. Johnston called the meeting to order at 4:49pm
- *Present at the Roll Call:* D. Barbaria [0]; N. Billington [0.5]; J. Breuer [1]; S. Chadhaury [4.5]; J. Chessin [1.5]; W. Choi [0.5]; V. Devatha [4.5]; R. Dunbar [4.5]; M. Ghandour [5.5]; C. Hodges [0]; M. Indimine [1]; E. Johnston [2.5]; S. Karnavat [5]; M. Kasher [0]; G. Kaufman [0]; D. Li [4.5]; M. McBride [0]; P. Russell [2.5]; J. Selig [4]; M. Stefanko [6];
- *Not Present at the Roll Call:* B. Bacharach (Unexcused) [5.5]; J. Batista (Unexcused) [3]; S. Gilbert (Unexcused) [2]; J. Kim (Unexcused) [1.5]; D. Liu (Unexcused) [2.5]; V. Michel (Unexcused) [5]; S. Tayal (Unexcused) [5.5]

II. Open Microphone

- Tiffany St. Bernard, a third year PHD biomedical student discussed her election platform for the Graduate Trustee position. She was focused on promoting better housing and diversity inclusion initiatives. As Chair of the Diversity and International Committee of the GPSA she cared about mentoring and providing for local communities. She discussed a strong platform revolving around minority group representation.
- G. Kaufman asked if he would vote alone against all other trustees.
- T. St. Bernard answered that she would vote against the trustees if she went against their opinions. On her own committee she had voted against the stipend rates for graduate students.

III. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

- The Minutes of the April 7th were approved by unanimous consent.

IV. Announcements and Reports

V. New Business

- There was a motion to move Resolution 50 to the top of the agenda.
 - There was dissent.
 - By a vote of 9-2-1 the motion was adopted.
- Resolution 50: Revision to Appendix B of the Student Assembly Charter
 - M. Stefanko introduced D. Li as the new VP of Finance. He welcomed amendments to Appendix B, but worried the conversation would focus solely on issues concerning Student Union Board funding.
 - J. Chessin asked about approving non-assembly members to committees. He was

also opposed removing funding from the Student Union Board, but still wanted to have access to the room.

- M. Stefanko believed there was no alternative measure other than funding cut threats that would give the Assembly power over the Student Union Board.
 - R. Dunbar raised that Appendix B set precedent over how student groups acted. If the assembly asked Cornell Cinema to play certain movies, and Outdoor Odyssey to undergo surveys, he believed there should be no reason why the Student Union Board could not abide by the Assembly's reservation policies.
 - M. Stefanko believed that diverse membership in Outdoor Odyssey and enforcing better economic practices at the cinema were different measures compared to enforcing the use of a room.
 - Lauren Lang from Class Councils stated that WSH would allow
 - C. Hodges asked about funding related to conferences attendance, and if members outside of club's executive boards would qualify. He believed that if the question was around accessibility it would be okay to use this room, but if the enforcement was simply because of the status of the Student Assembly he saw the decision as excessive.
 - M. Stefanko did not believe that there was justification for \$200-\$300 per students to travel.
 - There was a motion to amend §2 to include after D, "That the WSHSUB will allow Representative organizations with a compelling public interest to reserve rooms before times are open to public interest groups.
 - M. Ghandour believed the amendment was too paternalistic and negatively affected the Student Unions Board.
 - M. Stefanko believed that a room change would not have terrible implications. He said that it would be difficult to enforce this measure, opposing the language "compelling public interest" which would be difficult to define.
 - D. Li stated that she was not in favor of cutting the Student Union Board, but she wanted the other organizations that faced consequences to speak.
 - Lauren Lei stated that Class Councils would be moving into a different room the following year.
 - R. Dunbar believed this room served as an icon for the Assembly, and he also asked the sponsors if they had other rooms in mind that were more accessible.
 - P. Russell wanted to switch the conversation to if the Assembly needed the room to be the Assembly.
 - M. Stefanko declared the Assembly had used other rooms during the semester. He saw a need to work with the SUB during weeks when the Assembly was expecting to have a large audience.
 - M. McBride worked with the SUB in the past to gain the room. He believed the question over which groups would get the room needed to be discussed together.
 - S. Tayal believed the room could be used by other organizations. He saw the amendment as another excuse for the SUB to not grant room access to certain organizations that they themselves would not designate as having public interest.
 - M. Stefanko concurred that he was not in favor of pitting different organizations against each other.
 - Wellington the president of the Residential Student Congress, had seen no difference when the groups meetings began being held in a separate room.
 - There was a **Point of Information** over how many years the Assembly had used the WSH for meetings.
 - E. Johnston answered 30 years.
 - J. Kim asked the sponsor explain the conflict over the Student Union Board.
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- M. Stefanko stated that the SUB had previously granted reservations for Williard Straight Hall to other groups instead of the Assembly during the traditional Thursday meeting time.
 - G. Kaufman believed that this issue was over if the Assembly was regarded as representative of all undergraduate students.
 - M. Stefanko stated that as a representative for four years, he did not see any projects he worked on as dependent on the use of Willard Straight Hall.
 - There was a motion to vote.
 - By a vote of 7-9-5 the amendment **failed**.
 - There was a motion to amend §4 Q to replace Student Assembly Finance Commission with Student Activities Finance Commission.
 - By unanimous consent the resolution was **amended**.
 - There was a motion to amend §3 G. to include "...appointing a Student Assembly member *or a non-Student Assembly Member* to serve as..."
 - By unanimous consent the resolution was **amended**.
 - There was a motion to **Call the Question**.
 - By a vote of 18-4-0 Resolution 51 was **adopted** with the Chair voting in the affirmative.
- Resolution 51: Usage of the '15-'16 Student Assembly Infrastructure Fund
 - The sponsors stated Cornell was doing a lighting survey to determine where to put lighting around campus. Because of this study, Cornell would not be able to place lighting on campus for another three years.
 - There was a motion to vote.
 - By a vote of 13-4-1 Resolution 51 was **adopted**.
 - There was a motion to adjourn.

E. Johnston adjourned the meeting at 5:56pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter F. Biedenweg

Assembly Clerk, Office of the Assemblies