



## Cornell University Student Assembly

### Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, September 8, 2016 Meeting

4:45pm-6:30pm in WSH Memorial Room

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

- J. Berger called the meeting to order at 4:46pm
- *Present at the Roll Call:* J. Berger [0], T. Celestin [0], N. Chovanec [0], V. Devatha [0], R. Herz [0], A. Iglesias [0], M. Indimine [0], A. Issur [0], M. Kasher [1], D. Li [0], M. McBride [0], J. Montejo [0], J. Selig [0], W. Rong [0], E. Vargas [0.25]
- *Not Present at the Roll Call:* D. Liu (Excused) [0.25], H. Reichel (Unexcused) [0.5], Y. Wang (Excused) [0]

#### II. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

- The minutes from the September 1, 2016 meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

#### III. Open Microphone

#### IV. Announcements and Reports

- Elections - DOE Ghandour announced that eleven seats were open for the fall election.
- Hack-a-thon - Rep. Reichel
- SAIFC Updates - Rep. Kasher
- UA Committees - UA Rep. Kaufman requested the Assembly appoint members to the UA committees, as they needed to be staffed as soon as possible.
- Faculty Committees - VP McBride stated that the Faculty Senate requested the Assembly delegate students from the community to serve on their committees. The staffing committee would be looking at online applications.
- Rep. Issur stated part of the Economics Department's funding would not be granted to international students. On top of the Financial Aid policy change, he believed this additional burden created a difficult environment which further alienated international students.
- VP Li announced Cornell Concert Commission's inability to hold Homecoming and other events in Barton Hall, meant the money for these concerts was open for alternative uses. The money could be used for slope day, or other venues. Rep. Li said she would meet at noon in the Ivy Room on Monday September 12<sup>th</sup> to discuss the matter with both the Slope Day Board and the Concert Commission. She also requested students reach her at DL792 with comments.

#### V. Initiatives

- Home Plate - City and Local Affairs Committee
    - The sponsors Matthew Steffanetta and Julia Greenberg spoke about Home Plate. The initiative invites students to visit Ithaca locals for a home cooked meal. They are
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hoping to expand the program and gain more local residents who are not Cornell employees. They asked the SA to help by spreading the message to the greater Ithaca community.

- There was a motion to move Resolution 7 to the top of the Agenda.
- By unanimous consent the motion was adopted.

## VII. New Business

- Resolution 7: Reconsidering Lighting on the Slope (M. McBride, V. Devatha)
  - M. McBride stated that through a discussion the sponsors hoped to change the lighting on the slope to yellow bulbs.
  - Professor Sanders stated light pollution from bright white light is not safer than yellow light in regards to walking. Additionally, all outdoor lighting is bad for nature, and disrupts circadian rhythms the production of melatonin, which is a known suppressor of hormones which aid in the growth of breast and prostate cancer. Birds navigating by the moon and insects killed by lighting are all harmful to the larger ecosystem. They also harm fossil fuels. Carbon neutrality is also an issue.
  - A. Iglesias stated that safety concerns which the lighting was addressing involved walking on the slope.
  - Jonathan Goldstein '17 from Cornell Union for Disability Awareness believed it was important to work to build a campus supportive of everyone.
  - Y. Bhandari asked about the who the sponsors had discussed the resolution with, and their goals.
  - Professor Sanders stated the goal was to change the opinion on campus that more light was better.
  - M. McBride also clarified that their goal was to replace the lights with yellow bulbs.
  - M. Kasher stated she met with Professor Sanders before the project's approval. She proclaimed the SAIFC had previously brought this project up to the Assembly under courtesy, but was not required to. She reiterated that the previous assembly approved the decision by a vote of 10-2-0. She believed the goal of the university was promoting the health and well-being of students, not necessarily nature, and believed the bright white lights added a measure of perceived safety.
  - R. Herz believed nature was part of the health and wellness of a campus environment. She read a community member's statement into the record, "As a student with a mobility disability I personally support better lighting however a further step would be the addition of hand rails from the top to the bottom of the slope. I experience night blindness and the current state of the slope is impossible for me to navigate without help from a friend. Handrails would make me feel more comfortable since they would also act as a guiding mechanism and prevent accidental falls. I also know that many other students would appreciate the handrails, especially in the winter when many paths are slippery and it is difficult to navigate with snow and ice. I am sure that if there were handrails added on the slope it would help many students get safely from place to place during the nighttime. No student should feel that they should not be able to get somewhere on campus and right now the slope to me seems impossible to navigate at night. Adding these handrails would have a direct impact on my ability and others to get around campus and would be extremely appreciated!"
  - M. McBride believed that although the SAIFC had made a decision, the Assembly should have a final say in the campus environment.
  - D. Barbaria believed the actual language of the resolution was not instructive. He insisted that the Assembly amend the resolution to either include a change to the lights,

- or to remove the slope lighting. Stop light pollution is part of the 2030 goal.
- V. Devatha stated that the best way to address the environmental impact of the campus lights was through replacing them with less harmful colors.
- There was a motion to add to line 58, “Be it therefore resolved, the Student Assembly requests the administration that LEDs on the slope be replaced with yellow-sodium or amber LED lights.”
- There was a motion to vote on the amendment.
- By a vote of 15-0-1 the resolution was amended.
- There was a motion to add to line 61, “Be it therefore resolved that the student assembly recommends that the administration reforms existing lights on the slope to be motion detecting.”
- By a vote of 13-2-1 the resolution was amended.
- M. Ghandour requested the Assembly discuss alternatives that are safe for the environment and also safe for students.
- The sponsors agreed and believed the request to changing the light color from white to yellow was a step in the right direction.
- There was a motion to Call the Question.
- There was dissent.
- By a vote of 11-6-0 the motion to vote was adopted.
- By a vote of 11-4-3 with two community votes in the affirmative, the resolution was adopted.

#### V. Initiatives (Continued)

- Collegetown Block Party - Rep. Kasher spoke about hosting an annual block party as a way to invite new students to the community at the beginning of the year.

#### VI. Business of the Day

- Resolution 5: Updating the Charter
  - A. Iglesias motioned to strike Article IV Section 5’s first paragraph.
  - By a vote of 10-0-2 the Charter was amended.
  - There was a motion to adopt all yellow changes to the charter.
  - By a vote of 14-0-0 the yellow sections were adopted.
  - There was a motion to amend and move the sentence under Section 4 ii, to a newly designated section 4 iii. c. where it would read, “The Vice President for Finance can grant an extension for all organizations if there *is* a delay in the availability of application materials.”
  - By a vote of 15-0-0 the Charter was amended.
  - There was a motion to amend Section 4 ii, to read, “...each applicant must submit, using forms *that are hosted on the website of* the Office of the Assemblies...”
  - By unanimous consent the Charter was amended.
  - There was a motion to Call the Question
  - By a vote of 14-0-0 the Charter was adopted.
- Resolution 6: Establishment of a Policy Research and Planning Ad-Hoc Committee (P. Russell, M. Indimine)
  - The sponsors stated this committee would be an outgrowth of a list of ideas and projects for the Assembly to undertake. The committee would research and address policy issues, which would be released throughout the year.
  - G. Kaufman recommended the committee only have one chair. He also recommended the investigative team remain small.

- A. Iglesias asked about the relation of the Ad-Hoc committee to other committees.
  - There was a motion to amend the appendix to read, "...in order to inform representatives, *standing committees*, and other campus actors..."
  - By unanimous consent the resolution was amended.
  - M. Ghandour requested that investigatory committee remain large and believed that ten members would be a sufficient number.
  - There was a motion to amend the appendix to read "...no fewer than..."
  - By unanimous consent the resolution was amended.
  - There was a motion to Call the Question.
  - By a vote of 13-2-1 the motion was adopted.
- There was a motion to adjourn.
- J. Berger Adjourned the meeting at 6:34pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter F. Biedenweg

Assembly Clerk, Office of the Assemblies