



# Cornell University University Assembly

Cornell University Assembly  
Minutes of the March 16th, 2021 Meeting  
4:30 PM – 6:00 PM  
Zoom Meeting

- I. Call to Order
  - a. L. Kenney called the meeting to order at 4:32 PM.
  - a. *Members Present:* V. Aymer, U. Chukwukere, H. Depew, N. Danev, D. Dunham, J. Feit, B. Fortenberry, T. Fox, A. Hong, R. Howarth, L. Kenney, C. Levine, J. Pea, B. Sherr, L. Smith, P. Thompson, J. Withers.
  - b. *Members Absent:* C. Huang, C. Van Loan
  - c. *Also Present:* M. Hoy, Gina Giambattista.
- II. Call for Late Additions to the Agenda – 4:32pm to 4:35pm.
- III. J. Feit moved to add Res.15 “Amending the University Assembly Bylaws’ Title of the Standing ‘Campus Infrastructure Committee’ (CIC)”
  - i. B. Sherr seconded the motion.
  - ii. L. Kenney noted the resolution “Calling for the Repurposing of 120 Mary Ann Wood Drive, Ithaca, New York for use as a Veterans’ Support Center” would be changed to from Resolution 15 to 16.
  - iii. The motion passed with unanimous consent.
- IV. Business of the Day
  - a. Approval of Meeting Minutes (Mar. 2, 2021)
    - i. R. Howarth motioned to table the minutes.
      1. B. Sherr seconded the motion.
      2. The minutes were **tabled**, and the motion passed with unanimous consent.
  - b. Reciting the Land Acknowledgement
    - i. L. Kenney recited the Land Acknowledgement.
- V. New Business
  - a. Resolution 14: Calling on the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of America (TIAA) to divest funds from all fossil fuel holdings and agribusiness practices associated with deforestation and human rights abuses
    - i. C. Levine reported that TIAA is one of two retirement funds that faculty and staff at Cornell are allowed to participate in. It is one of the biggest investors of fossil fuels, including coal. They are the direct owner of two fracked gas plants. TIAA is a non-profit that protects retirement accounts, and it is against their basic principles as teachers and educators to invest money into fossil fuels. When talking to TIAA about this matter, they stated



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that there was a lack of clients coming forward with this concern. C. Levine stated that the first step is to inform other people and start to put pressure on TIAA as a campus. The SUNY system has already put out statements on this matter.

- ii. R. Howarth thanked C. Levine and stated his support.
  - iii. T. Fox said that they agreed with the goals but asked why they left Fidelity out of this Resolution.
  - iv. C. Levine said that Fidelity is the next target, but TIAA doesn't have an option to have a fossil-free fund.
  - v. L. Kenney stated their support. They stated that this passed in the CIC before coming to the UA.
  - vi. R. Howarth moved to vote on this resolution.
    1. B. Sherr seconded this motion.
    2. The resolution passed with 14-0-1.
- b. Resolution 15: Amending the University Assembly Bylaws to allow for the Continuation of Ad Hoc Committees and Subcommittees
- i. L. Kenney stated that this also passed in the CIC.
  - ii. J. Feit asked for the resolution to be moved to a later time.
  - iii. B. Sherr asked where to move the resolution.
  - iv. R. Howarth stated that this is a long-standing and understood issue. They offered to talk about this resolution.
  - v. L. Kenney agreed, however stated that they wanted to respect J. Feit's position as the only sponsor.
  - vi. J. Feit agreed that they should move forward without him.
  - vii. R. Howarth stated that changing the name it acknowledges the breadth of the committee outside of infrastructure. This was recommended last year but was waylaid during COVID-19 changes.
  - viii. N. Danev stated that they could not open the link
  - ix. L. Kenney said this resolution can only be voted on in the next meeting as it is a bylaw change.
  - x. D. Dunham motioned to table the resolution until the next meeting.
    1. J. Pea seconded the motion.
    2. The resolution was tabled with unanimous consent.
  - xi. U. Chukwukere took over the chair-ship.
- c. Resolution 16: Calling for a Veterans Support Center
- i. L. Kenney presented the resolution. This resolution ensures veterans are adequately supported and addresses Cornell's lack of counselors with



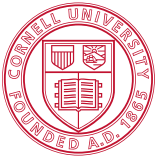
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specialized knowledge in military service-related experiences. This resolution also serves to support the transition from military to civilian life. L. Kenney and M. Hoy believe that tabling is the correct move so further communication with Cornell University Veteran's Association (CUVA), Cornell Law Veteran's Association (CLVA), Johnson's Association of Veterans, and other veterans or veteran groups can be consulted. L. Kenney plans to add this resolution to her Board of Trustees report and further garner UA input.

- ii. L. Kenney acknowledged a private message about a house already dedicated to veterans. She stated that this building physically will house veterans but doesn't offer any services otherwise.
- iii. M. Hoy stated CUVA has been working with the administration to secure a house on West Campus. It is a physical space to build a sense of community among veterans and also serves to help reach out into the community.
- iv. L. Kenney stated that the big difference is one house is currently slated as a home for veterans and the proposal seeks to establish a foundational space for veterans to congregate on campus and receive additional services.
- v. H. Depew stated that there is a Veteran's Employee Assembly Representative who is on the Veteran's Colleague Network Group that they might want to reach out to if not already.
- vi. T. Fox asked what the staffing looks like in this space.
- vii. L. Kenney stated that it would be an open space for individuals to come in to speak and perhaps for veteran-focused CAPS counselors to visit.
- viii. N. Danev stated their support of this resolution. They also proposed to create similar spaces that are dedicated to talking about one topic, such as veteran's affairs, for other groups.
- ix. B. Sherr offered to bring forward another resolution from the CWC addressing the need for veteran specialist in the CAPS department.
- x. G. Giambattista, as a community member, inquired if they are looking into asking for a resource allocation in the new residence space.
- xi. M. Hoy recognized R. Platt's comment. They state Barton Hall is for ROTC and undergraduates are not able to utilize that space currently.
- xii. L. Kenney moved to table the resolution to the next meeting with the understanding that sponsors will be conducting more research.
  1. J. Withers seconded the motion.
  2. The motion passed and the resolution was **tabled** with 15-0-1.
- xiii. L. Kenney thanked those involved.
- xiv. L. Kenney reclaimed chairship.

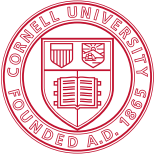
### VI. Committee Updates

- a. Executive Committee
  - i. The Executive Committee had no updates.
- b. Campus Infrastructure Committee



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- i. J. Feit stated that they had their first meeting. The committee discussed Resolutions 14 and 15, introduced today.
  - c. Campus Welfare Committee
    - i. B. Sherr stated that they formally established the ad-hoc naming committee. The staff of the committee is first staffed with interested members in the CWC and then they will then bring in community members from groups across campus.
    - ii. L. Kenney asked about the reach-out process.
    - iii. B. Sherr stated that it will be up to the committee members. They stated that they serve as the tiebreaker but it will be left to the committee members.
    - iv. L. Kenney thanked B. Sherr for offering to create a resolution with regards to a veteran-specific CAPS counselor.
  - d. Codes and Judicial Committee
    - i. B. Fortenberry stated that they did not have quorum but have shifted the meeting timeframe accordingly. They are working to ensure there is no lapse in coverage in the UHRB. They are also working on the transition between the current and new code through the potential construction of two cohorts—one for the old code and one focused on the new.
    - ii. L. Kenney commended B. Fortenberry for their forward-thinking and facilitation of the transition between codes.
    - iii. B. Fortenberry thanked L. Kenney, committee members, and G. Giambattista.
  - e. L. Kenney stated that there are several resignations in committees that need to be filled.
  - f. P. Thompson said that they would reach out to groups individually, but there is a UA spot in the CJC.
  - g. L. Kenney reiterated the importance of staffing committees.
- VII. Constituent Group Updates
  - a. Student Assembly
    - i. L. Smith said that they appropriated some funds into the Student Access Fund. They looked at election rules and are looking to get voter turn-up higher.
    - ii. J. Feit asked if the election schedule is already published and how they will disseminate the election deadlines.
    - iii. G. Giambattista said that elections will be online, but there should be many emails to disseminate the information. They welcome any suggestions.
    - iv. L. Smith acknowledged the impact that Cornell Votes will have on elections.
  - b. Graduate & Professional Student Assembly
    - i. D. Dunham stated that the GPSA donated to the Access Fund per the internal budget of last semester and is assessing other needed areas of funding. There were also a number of students expressing that TA's are feeling overwhelmed due to the reduction of TA-ships available and lack of external funding. The Student Advocacy Committee introduced a resolution calling on the University to release data on the current state of TA-ships to



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inform funding of TAs. Additionally, representatives from PhDs at CornellTech have come forward with concerns about paying the full Student Activity Fee as most by-line funding goes to entities from which they don't benefit.

- c. Employee Assembly
  - i. H. Depew stated that they just had an employee staff forum to hear senior leadership reflections on the past year. They were able to ask questions about matters regarding the staff. Recent data suggested the demographics that feel like the least belong are the LBTQ and disabled community. In response, they are presenting the idea of network groups. The Employee Assembly is also meeting with Angela Winfield to discuss the future of inclusive statements.
  - ii. L. Kenney asked if they are open to inviting members of the UA and if there was an opportunity to collaborate and support the EA on these efforts.
- d. Faculty Senate
  - i. G. Giambattista said that there is a meeting tomorrow and the agenda is posted along with the resolutions to be discussed.

### VIII. Open Floor Discussion

- a. L. Kenney welcomed N. Danev to the UA.
- b. D. Dunham stated that they had to leave early. But introduced N. Danev as the current Executive Vice President, with an interest in issues regarding international students.
- c. L. Kenney stated that they are speaking to the Board of Trustees on Friday.
- d. P. Thompson said there are vacancies in the CIC, CJC and, CWC.
- e. B. Sherr added that their Undergrad Representative at Large has decided to leave, however, they have candidates interested in the position.
- f. L. Kenney said that if they cannot choose, they are welcome to send the candidates to the UA Executive Committee. They also noted that if you are the head of the constituency, you can designate someone in the executive committee to vote in your place.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:48PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kassandra Jordan  
Clerk of the Assembly



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### APPENDIX A

#### Chat Transcript

00:25:58 UA - Bennett Sherr (He/Him/His): Can the link to the res be put in the chat for everyone to have access to?

00:26:05 Logan Kenney (she, her):

<https://cornell.box.com/s/5joxcn5p88gin2kq8sf2ur5lg8gbbtuz>

00:28:37 Logan Kenney (she, her): ^^ Resolution

00:29:00 Logan Kenney (she, her): Proposed Title: The Campus Committee on Infrastructure, Technology, and the Environment

00:39:52 UA Jessica Withers (she/her): Yes! I just checked with Debra Howell from the VCNG. Please do, thank!

00:40:55 Robert Platt: There is already space in the West Campus War memorial and in Barton Hall.

00:47:52 Robert Platt: Both spaces are controlled by Military Science Dept.

00:49:02 UA - Jacob Feit: Absolutely

00:51:14 UA - Bennett Sherr (He/Him/His): Thank you for coming Mitch!

00:52:19 Mitchell Hoy: Thank you all SO much!

00:54:54 UA - Jacob Feit: HAHAAHA

00:55:24 UA - Jacob Feit: We love you Bennett, just messing

01:18:57 Gina Giambattista (she/her/hers): Faculty Senate Meeting Agenda

01:18:58 Gina Giambattista (she/her/hers):

<https://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/faculty-senate/archives-and-actions/archived-agenda-and-minutes/online-senate-march-17/>