

# CMU Student Senate

Minutes of November 6, 2008

## 5:06 Roll Call

**Senators Present:** Cassandra Abernathy (CIT, 2 proxies, 1.5 absences), Dorian Adeyemi (HSS, 1.5 absences), Mana Ameri (CIT, 1 proxy), Steve Burton (CFA, 2.5 absences), Miriam Cha (CIT, 1 absence), Zexi Chen (SCS, 1 absence), Jake Flittner (CIT), Christopher Franzi (HSS, 2 proxy), Aaron Gross (HSS, 2 proxies), Michael He (CIT, 1.5 absences), Jayesh Kapoor (TSB, 2 proxies), Barbara Kasbergen (CFA), Chansaly Ker (CIT, 1 proxy), Eunjin Kim (CFA), Diane Lee (CIT, 1 proxy), Kush Mangal (MCS), Bassem Mikhael (BHA/BSA/SHS, 1 proxy), Natalie Morris (SCS, 1 proxy), Daniel O'Toole (CIT, 2 proxies, 1.5 absences), Stuti Pandey (HSS, .5 proxies), Marcela Partida (CIT), Dina Patel (MCS, 1 absence), Robert Piston Jr. (MCS, 1 absence), Vivake Prasad (HSS, 2 proxies), Sonali Shah (MCS, .5 absence), Prashanth Swamy (MCS, 1 proxy, 1.5 absences), Benjamin Trump (BHA/BSA/SHS, 1 absence), Thomas Tuttle (SCS, 1.5 absences), Akshay Udiavar, Damian Valdes (TSB, 1 proxy, 2.5 absences), Carolina Velez, (HSS, 2 proxies), Brian Wade (TSB, 1.5 absences), Lingshui Wang (CFA, 1 absence), Nik White (CIT, 1.5 absences), Eric Wu (SCS, 1 absence)

**Members-at Large Present:** Jarett Adams, Urna Biswas (2 absences), Marcel Christian, Katie Chong (2 absences), Amy Kao (3 absences), Meghan Nahass, Zack Pierce, Keshav Raghavan (1 proxy, 2 absences), Stephanie Schneider (1 absence), Zachary Stockwell, Krishan Taylor (1 absence), Will Zhang

**Members-at-Large Absent:** Mariluz Orbay Cerrato (1 absence), Gurmukh Chhabra (3+ absences)

## 5:04 Call to Order

## 5:08 Agenda Approved

## 5:08 Minutes Approved

## 5:08 Audience Participation

## 5:09 Committee Reports

- **Academic Affairs (Brian Wade):** No report.
- **Business Affairs (Benjamin Trump):** New CS people in committee will work on the script and will hopefully finish by Saturday night. Now just need to work on content. Also working on UC improvements to make it a more technologically up-to-date building. The committee is also still in contact with the Port Authority. Finally will meet with Scott again regarding the readership program. Will have posters on campus where students can find newspaper kiosk stands. Also might get a 4<sup>th</sup> newspaper on campus.
  - (Zexi Frank) What would the 4<sup>th</sup> newspaper be?
    - *Washington Post*, if it was my choice, however we'll ask students what they want.
  - (Jay Kapoor) What do we have currently?
    - *The Pittsburgh Gazette*, *New York Times*, and *USA Today*.
  - (Daniel O'Toole) I know a lot of students get papers just for the crossword puzzle.
    - It's up to students how they use the newspapers; they are paying their media fee for how they want to use it.
  - (Zexi Frank) If you get four, then don't all the kiosks have to be replaced?
  - Yes, it'll be an added cost. We will do a lot of research and have a full report in a couple of weeks.
- **Campus Life (Damian Valdez):** UC late night will be on November 22. Still working on getting free trade coffee. Also, campus gear sale for next Friday, the 14<sup>th</sup>. Please sign-up. Also, can make up half absences by tabling.

- **Communications (Nara Kasbergen):** Working on a way to encourage more students to come to Senate meetings. Launching a visibility campaign—come up with posters that have interesting things to attract students to come. Posters have two truths and a lie....students come to find out the truth. Additionally, assigning people to poster routes only occasionally works—members need to ensure they follow through. To aid in this, made the poster routes shorter so it won't take more than ten minutes, although it'll require 10 people to use these routes.
- **Finance (Marcela Partida):** No allocations for this week; next week will have 6 or 7. Finance has accomplished most of what it wanted to this semester, which was changing the bylaws.
- **Internal Development (Cassandra Abernathy and Zexi Frank):** Ready to order t-shirts. Sign-up on the sheet. Trying to have a social get together. The social event will be on November 20—will have a Thanksgiving dinner. Please RSVP.
- **Chair:** Cookies for comments to reach out to constituents. Goal is to target students in your school—will have a point person for each school.

### **5:30 Special Business (Elections)**

#### **5:32 Election for CFA Senator**

5:32 Speech by Akshay

5:33 Questions for Akshay

5:38 Discussion

5:40 Move to Vote (Simple Majority Vote—roll call)

**5:43 Akshay Iavu elected new CFA senator.**

#### **5:44 Election for SCS Senator**

5:44 Speech by Krishan Taylor

5:46 Questions for Krishan Taylor

5:53 Speech by Eric Wu

5:55 Questions for Eric Wu

5:57 Discussion

6:03 Move to Vote (Simple Majority Vote—roll call)

**6:05 Eric Wu elected new SCS senator**

#### **6:07 Member-at-large Nominations**

#### **6:07 Election for Member-at-large**

6:07 Speech by Will

6:09 Questions for Will

6:10 Speech by Marcel

6:12 Questions for Marcel

6:14 Discussion

6:19 Move to Vote (Vote by Acclimation)

**6:20 Will and Marcel elected new Members-at-large**

### **6:20 Business from the Floor (Evan Osheroff, Vice President of Student Finance)**

#### **Students Activities Fee Increase Proposal**

- Regarding the 5% increase in the Student Activities Fee

#### **6:20 Questions**

- (Benjamin Trump) Why now and not after the audit?

- It has to be passed this semester because it has to be taken to the board of trustees by December.
- (Brian Wade) When will it go into effect?
  - The board will approve it in February and then it will be incorporated into the JFC funding process this Spring

#### **6:24 Discussion**

- (Brain Wade) We can fund more events and do more in Senate. Also, 4 dollars is what a cup of coffee costs at Starbucks.
- Pont of Information: Media fee is different than the Student's Activities Fee.
- (Zach) Question to Marcela: Is there a reason why you think we need this increase?
  - In the past, we've run out of money and had to turn groups away. After carnival, groups had unexpected occurred costs or reimbursements, but we didn't have enough to give them.
- (Benjamin Trump) I know the importance of groups but I can't confidently vote yes on this and still represent my constituents.
- (Brian Wade) The gain that we can get from this is that there is so much more value to the \$92. Like for going to museums for free in the Pittsburgh area—it's paid for by that fee. Also, it offsets food costs that are at student activities events. If we take away the Students Activities Fee, we decrease the quality of the experience here.
- (Nik White) Voting no on this doesn't mean that you're voting against the Student's Activities Fee, it'll still go up 2 dollars.
- What happens to the excess?
  - It gets redistributed to JFC.
- (Vivake Prasad) Student involvement has changed the atmosphere at CMU. It plays a big part on the lives of students on this campus. It's important that we're able to fund them. The fee hasn't been raised in a long time and there are many more groups than prior years.
  - Regardless of what happens, it'll be \$88 next year. If voted yes on this it'll be \$92. Constitutionally, we have to say 5% increase, but it really is only two additional dollars that you're voting on.
- (Dorian Adeyemi) I understand some of the concerns. There are certain issues where constituents trust us to voice for them. What we're asking for is far below other increases in the economy; we're only helping ourselves now. I don't think it's too much to ask for if it keeps us going into deficit.
- (Diane Lee) I talked to constituents and students believe it should be passed. There are organizations that are looking for funding and JFC doesn't have the money.

**6:38 Move to Vote (Roll Call Vote). Passed. 5% Increase in the Student Activities Fee beginning next fall semester.**

#### **6:41 Points of Discussion**

- (Dorian Adeyemi) COSO recognized events should be posted and well advertised. The problem is that people don't know about it. Maybe have a calendar available online.
- (Daniel O'Toole) What if campus life announced Senate funded events?

#### **6:41 Announcements**

- Thanksgiving dinner
- Students Activities Office-Thanksgiving basket drive

- Need people to table for Sleeping Bag Weekend.
- Bhangra in the Burgh this Saturday.

**6:48 Adjourn**