

# CMU Student Senate

RAW Minutes of April 26, 2007

## 5:06 pm Roll Call

**Senators Present:** Rotimi Abimbola (HSS, 2 absences, proxy), Robert Bethea (CIT, 1 absence, .5absence), Joel Bergstein(CIT), Gerrit Betz(HSS), Byron Chou (TSB, .5absence), Philip Croul (HSS, 1 absences), Alan Eaton (CIT), Kate Eckerle (MCS, 1 absence), Joe Gershenson (SCS, 2 absences), Jenny Han (SCS, 1 absence), Ashley Hill (CIT, 2 absence, .5absence), Lauren Hudock (HSS), Jared Itkowitz (TSB, 1 absence), Melissa Kim (CIT, 1 absence), Megan Larcom (TSB), Cyrus Larijani (BHA), Emily Leathers (SCS), Julia Li (CFA, 2 absences), Edward Oh (1 absence, .5absence), Evan Osheroff (MCS, 1 absence), Fredrico Pineda (MCS, 2 absences), Colin Sternhell (HSS), Brian Wade (HSS, .5absence), Lauren Walch (CIT)

**Senators Absent:** Matt Adams (TSB, 3 absences), Danielle Griswold (HSS, 2 absences), Paris Obdan (CIT, 2 absences, .5absence), Dan O'Toole (CIT, 1 absence)

## 5:07 pm Call to Order

## 5:07 pm Approval of Minutes from 4/12/2007

## 5:08 pm Audience Participation

## 5:08 pm Ex-Officio Reports

### 5:08 pm Parking and Transportation Services (Michelle Porter)

- We opened up parking allocations, from April 9 to April 30
- The permit year runs from July 1 to June 30
- You can put your parking fees on your student account once you enroll in the parking program. We accept Plaidcash too
- Parking rates are on the web site.
- We're discontinuing the debit program on June 15. We will give you pre validated tickets for your balance if you have one
- Will there still be free parking on weekends?
- Yes. And after 5pm on weekdays

## 5:10 pm Change in Post Office

- Postage stamps will cost 41 cents starting May 14

- Right now, the pricing structure is based on weight. It will be changed based on the shape of the item.
- Forever stamps are on sale. It's a book of 20 stamps you buy at the new price, but you can still use them if prices rise again
- Consult with us at post office if you have questions
- The first week of pack up will be at old rates, 2<sup>nd</sup> week at new rates
- We are not allowed to offer ups anymore
- Does that apply to Fedex and dhl?
- Yes
- You can go to Mailboxes Etc on Craig Street. You pay for you packages online and they have free pick up or you can drop off the boxes yourself
- There are new window hours. Everyone will get a flier in their mailbox
- Will they bring back the stamp machine?
- No, but you can get stamps at the info desk when we're closed

#### **5:18 pm Committee Reports**

##### **5:18 pm Academic Affairs** (Evan Osheroff)

- No report

##### **5:18 pm Business Affairs** (Jared Itkowitz)

- No report

##### **5:18 pm Campus Life** (Megan Larcom)

- No report

##### **5:18 pm Communications** (Lauren Hudock)

- Elections got postponed again, so we can do more advertising
- I printed out more posters and fliers
- Every committee will poster after the meeting
- We had our constituency barbeque on Tuesday. It was highly successful.
- Everyone should have come. Several people were there the entire time
- We'd like to have more meetings like that, but everyone needs to come

#### **5:21 pm Questions**

##### **5:21 pm Finance** (Alan Eaton)

- Numbers are on the last page
- Thanks for a great year

#### **5:22 pm Questions**

- When do JFC budgets freeze?

- Very soon. David will be sending out an email

5:22 pm **Internal Development** (Gerrit Betz)

- Read the article and tell me what you think. I wrote it to put in the Tartan
- ID has very large budget. There will be \$2000 after we buy T-shirts and clickers.  
I want to propose giving \$2000 for special allocations for next semester

5:24 pm Questions

5:24 pm **Chair** (Joel Bergstein)

- Next week is the last meeting of the year and the first meeting of next year
- Talk to current chairs if you want to be a chair. I want every chair to give a short description of what they do
- Academic Affairs works with the library, administration, UEC, CSW, anything academic related
- Business Affairs works with the library, computer services, parking services, university advancement, Entropy, anything having to do with money
- Campus Life does miscellaneous events. We're looking at next year's orientation, extending student health service hours on Sundays, and getting more shuttles to and from sports events
- Communications does lots of work. We poster, organize outreach events, and we need to understand information flow on campus.
- Finance chair is the independent moderator of meetings with other groups that come in asking for allocations. You need to be able to explain the group to the entire Senate body.
- ID is in charge of senate running as a whole. We're like and RA for Senate
- Senate Chair runs excomm, make agendas, attend student government, student affairs meetings.
- Sergeant at Arms cleans office, does all printing, and helps set up meetings.

5:33 pm Questions

5:33 pm **New Business from Committee**

5:33 pm **0607-094 Special Allocation of \$250 to Soho**

- They had a Day of Silence kick off breakfast, t-shirts, and a bake sale
- Their talent showcase was last night

5:33 pm Questions

- Is this for reimbursement?  
Yes

- What's the AB tech charge?
- We borrowed equipment from AB so they charged us
- How many people attended?
- The evening event had upwards of 40 people. It was a good group of people.

There was a suggested donation of \$5 and we made around \$200

5:35 pm Discussion

5:35 pm Call the Question (Evan Osheroff)

5:35 pm Voice Vote, passed

5:35 pm **0607-095 Special Allocation of \$300 to 5L**

- The dance group currently operates at CMU
- They are having an event at the UC black chairs this Friday
- It showcases talent at cmu and in the area
- They will have some food
- Committee decided on \$300 because they are getting \$400 from UC Late night and \$200 from Dancer's Symposium
- It's open to the public

5:36 pm Questions

5:36 pm Discussion

5:36 pm Call the Question (Brian Wade)

5:37 pm Passed by Consent

5:37 pm **0607-096 Special Allocation of \$500 to Student Body President for End of the Year Reception**

- Karl is holding a reception at his house. There will be Rita's and Chipotle
- There will be a roast

5:38 pm Questions

5:38 pm Discussion

- We should do this and we can invite the newly elected senators
- Will we have to increase allocation if we're going to host more people
- 5:39 pm Motion to Amend to \$742 (Gerrit Betz) sec brian
- I gave \$2000 to the special allocation pool. I'm subsidizing a subsidy for the event
- Did we fund more than \$500 for food before?
- The fall retreat cost \$550 for 11 senators.

5:43 pm Motion Withdrawn

5:43 pm Passed by Consent

5:43 pm **0607-097 Special Allocation \$500 to Solar Decathlon**

- They built the environmentally friendly house by Donner Ditch
- It's a collaboration of different schools at CMU
- Every 2 years they build a house and take it to competition in DC
- This is for a kickoff barbeque
- We thought \$500 was appropriate because our barbeque cost \$500
- It's on May 4, 6:30-8:30. We will present the old house and the new house that will go into construction this summer

5:44 pm Questions

- Is there a charge at the barbeque?
- No, it's free to the student body
- In the fall, Jen Church has agreed to pay for buses to the competition
- Can anyone work on the house?
- Yes. It will be at Construction Junction starting May 14

5:45 pm Discussion

- I went to the comp. Our school's house stood out significantly
- It sounds like a good recruiting event too

5:46 pm Call the Question (Colin Sternhell)

5:46 pm Passed by Consent

5:46 pm **0607-098 Special Allocation of \$100 to The Cut for supplies**

- The Cut is a Carnegie Mellon music magazine. They will start publishing in the fall
- Publications are costly
- We don't have enough to give more funds, but in light of new information I would suggest to support this and ask them to come back next week

5:49 pm Questions

- Is the entire cost for printing?
- Yes, for 3 months

5:50 pm Discussion

- Sounds like a great idea.
- Pittsburgh has great music scene but a lot of people don't know about it. The magazine will help
- Will it be free?

- Yes

5:50 pm Call the Question (Brian Wade)

5:50 pm Voice Vote, passed

5:52 pm **0607-100 Campaign Funds Amendment**

- We felt one of the issues is the amount it costs candidates to advertise.
- If student government will prosper, we need votes and we need to advertise
- Candidates should be able to advertise their positions.
- We feel there are discrepancies of personal funds, and that should not make a difference in running
- Campaign funds will be available for candidates running for executive positions

5:57 pm Questions

- Would it be friendly if we could have the amount approved by Senate and GSA?
- Yes, we just wanted to make the wording as simple as possible
- We can add in a friendly veto opportunity
- We don't want to mandate receipts. If you lose one, you have a motive to not report that. We want everything reported
- What about websites?
- If you get something for free, you still have to assign it a value
- Where is the money coming from?
- The student government operating reserve
- Will there be a max amount that will be spent? So if we have 50 candidates, we won't run out of funds?
- Elections board has the prerogative.
- Will there be an info session for the candidates explaining how to use the funds?
- I hope the people who are responsible will arrange one
- What if the candidates starts campaigning and goes over the cap before it is announced?
- We can change "30 days in advance" to when petitions are approved by elections board.
- I think there are a lot of loopholes
- I don't think that was a real concern. If you think if there is a concern, we can sit down and change it. Right now the spirit is to give money to candidates, not to set a cap
- What are the repercussions if the cap is exceeded?

- We could add another clause
- Please email Karl and Andrea with questions and concerns

#### 6:10 pm **0607-101 Fiscal Policy Amendment**

- How do we get students to get as much value out of the activities fee as possible?
- At end of year, rather than use forecasted numbers decided on in February, you're taking projections and adding in the surplus. We are getting money as fast as possible to organizations able to spend it in that year, for example, Student Senate
- Throughout this week we're renaming the student government operating reserve to Capital fund to be true to the spirit of the account
- We're changing the caps on the deep reserve, from 10% to 7%
- The cap of the Capital fund will change from 12% to 5%.

#### 6:16 pm Questions

- How is this different from what we have already?
- The goal is to decrease the range of variance in how much money is not spent. There will be an awkward accounting year the first year this is adopted. There will be a lot of money the first year.
- How does the surplus file through?
- Nothing changes but number going to JFC is smaller. A chunk of it goes to special allocations
- Do you have data from the past years?
- Right now looking at trends in our accounting is hard because there is a big variance every year. We're trying to reduce that variance
- Could you send us the present and future flow charts?

Yes

#### 6:29 pm **0607-102 Statement of Purpose for the Student Activities Fee**

- We wanted to create a missions statement for all Senate, GSA, and JFC

#### 6:29 pm Questions

- This mentions innovative events and variety, but no mention of tradition. I don't think we should exclude events CMU has had for many years. I don't know if you want to add in a statement about that?
- I don't feel like we can answer that, but we can put that in discussion
- Spiritual stands out to me. Is that intended to be religious?

- It's intended to reference holistic groups.

#### 6:33 pm **0607-103 More Fiscal Amendments**

- We were working on the funding eligibility process
- We felt organizations should prove the organization was active, before we fund them

#### 6:35 pm Questions

- Coso has to recognize group before they go to JFC. So groups need to be re-recognized?
- This is for new funding eligibility. If the group was recognized, but have not done any activities they can not get new funding
- I think there is a disparity between the definitions of religious, charitable, and academic events and political events
- The typical justification is that it may violate CMU's tax exempt status.
- We denied groups before because we felt they were religious. With this, it would mean we would have been able to fund every event that came to us.
- In the past, we've been very ambiguous. It's important that JFC have a clear reason if an organization is denied funding
- With regard to caps on the JFC deep reserve, we should not be touching caps unless there is a big circumstance. One of the ideas is lowering caps to student government operating reserve.
- So only difference between your amendment and Karl's is #2?
- There are a lot differences. I don't feel we should be changing around numbers to fix the accounting problem
- Can we find some way to consolidate this and the other one?
- Yes

#### 6:49 pm **0607-099 Executive Pay Amendment**

- Executives of student body should be paid.
- Karl had to take out a \$10,000 loan and I stayed another semester for my office
- Other executives of student organizations are also paid, i.e. the Tartan staff, clerks, and executive positions from other student governments in the area
- This number would be \$6.25 an hour for a 20 hour work week

#### 6:55 pm Questions

- What happens in the event the executive position does not do their job?



- Then they should be removed. It's in the constitution. It would also give the student body more incentive to pay attention to the student government
- What are the other schools you mentioned?
- Chatham's student government is paid the least. It depends how much you're working. Chatham's makes pennies per hour. U Pitt is the highest, but we don't want to copy them. Their student body president gets free tuition.
- Does GSA have to pass this too?
- Yes
- Hours aren't logged. How will you be held accountable?
- I feel that's up to everyone if that wants to be changed
- What other organizations pay people on campus?
- The Tartan, AB, Pulse
- Do we know how much the person at Tartan gets paid?
- Each staff gets paid, but we don't know how many people are on each staff. It's from the JFC budget
- We have a \$1500 operating budget. Do you think that should be separate?
- I think it should be separate because then there is a pressure to not pay yourself
- How many hours do you think you work a week?
- It depends on the week and meeting schedules
- Would you feel uncomfortable taking the money away from the students?
- I wouldn't have proposed this at the beginning of my term, but I feel it should happen now
- Where's the money coming from?
- That can be discussed, but we're thinking of the capital fund. It would still be coming from the students' activities fee
- It should be a low enough amount that no one will run for money, but it should defray the cost you're spending doing the job instead of other opportunities
- Where do you think this should stop? Do you think presidents of large cultural groups should be paid also?
- I think this is partially reflected off of how you feel about student government. Student government should be the umbrella over all the other organizations. I don't feel I can speak for other groups

7:08 pm Discussion

- My issue is that I like the idea for the following year instead of next year. I know people have not run this year because of the opportunity cost
- This idea is good. I'm concerned it's a little high. It's more than what RA's get paid. Maybe we could change it to \$4000 to \$5000.
- I feel discussion should be more veered towards what's an appropriate amount. By enacting this, we're giving them the opportunity to do their job
- It could be argued both ways. Money shouldn't be an incentive for people to run. So many student organizations are fighting for money, now we're talking about taking away \$18,000. I don't think student organizations would be happy about that.
- I agree with acknowledging work done by the executives. Salaries can be debated. I would entertain the logging of hours.
- Out of all the organizations we fund, only 16 get more than \$6000. You can't really put a monetary value on the position. Also, I feel there's no accountability for the execs. We can impeach someone for doing something, but not for doing nothing
- I think this is a great idea, but for the future. I feel once we have a plan and more research, we can create a job description, log hours, and make this more legitimate.
- Amendments to this are friendly. It could be passed saying when it would go into affect.
- I think we should probably not pass this right now, even though it should be passed in the future. We can pass a resolution saying that we support it.
- I'm still concerned about where the money is coming from. Pitt has the school paying the tuition, but here it would be the students. I'm also concerned about the accountability. I don't think it's something we should vote on now
- Maybe it could be more of a bonus at the end of the semester. Students should be running to serve the body, not getting a paycheck.
- I think the figure allows the execs to spend more time and increase the profile of the position
- Being an exec is a job and it should be compensated in some way.
- I'm not comfortable with money coming from students to pay execs. In the end we all make sacrifices with our time. Maybe a grant from the school would work.

- AB chairs are not paid. I think if you feel execs should be paid, you should discuss whether it would be through a constitutional amendment or through the JFC process. Then the amount can be adjusted in a year to year process.
- People will be held accountable if they are paid. They should be paid through the activities fee so they aren't pressured by the administration. This should go through today because many initiatives are dropped when they are moved to next year.
- \$6000 in activity fees is a lot different from a \$6000 grant. I agree that the privilege of even having an executive position puts you in the position where you should be accountable. I think we can work something out where it's not the student activities fee.
- There are too many concerns to pass this now, but I think we should pass a resolution that we revisit this
- I think we should put this out to the students in the form of a ballot. I feel like everyone should have a say on it. Even though we may have more experience in student government, we could use new opinions

7:43 pm Motion to postpone to the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of next session (Jared Itkowitz)

7:43 pm Second (Kate Eckerle)

7:43 pm Discussion

- We should make sure one of the committees will spearhead it
- I feel there is a good discussion right now. I feel the fourth meeting is too late.

7:44 pm Hand Vote, 16:2:1 passed

#### **7:46 pm New Business from the Floor**

- I wrote a resolution that should be read out loud in the fourth meeting of the next session
- We will vote on it next week.

#### **7:48 pm Points of Discussion**

#### **7:48 pm Announcements**

- Elections have been moved to 12:01 am April 30<sup>th</sup> to 1 pm May 2<sup>nd</sup>
- There will be a mandatory joint meeting on May 2<sup>nd</sup> to confirm the election results
- Stay after the meeting to poster

7:49 pm Move to Adjourn (Krishan Taylor)

#### **7:49 pm Adjourn**