

MINUTES¹
USG Senate Meeting
Thursday, November 3rd, 2011

Meeting called to order at 7:06 pm. Meeting held in Wang Center Room 201.

Agenda item 1.0: Attendance

The roll was called:

Senator David Adams	Present
Senator Oluwasegun Adedapo	Present
Senator Emily Alcott	Present
Senator Shon Augustine	Excused Absence
Senator Lance Bertrand	Late (7:49 pm)
Senator Tiffany Bibby	Late (7:24 pm)
Senator Nicholas Ela	Present
Senator Ray Fan	Late (7:15 pm)
Senator Frank Fanizza	Present
Senator Max Gunther	Present
Senator Eric Lau	Present
Senator Anna Lubitz	Excused Absence
Senator Adam Meier	Present
Senator Sean Moore	Present
Senator Corey Platt	Present
Senator Masood Rustemi	Present
Senator Alexandra Santiago	Present
Senator Najee Simmons (PPT)	Present
Senator Priya Sohi	Present
Senator David Szeszler	Present
Senator Andrew Tausz	Present
Senator Ryann Williams Thomas)	Present by Proxy (Mr. Justin Thomas)

President Mark Maloof	Present
Executive Vice President Deborah Machalow	Present
Treasurer Thomas Kirnbauer	Present
Vice President of Clubs and Organizations Allen Abraham	Absent
Vice President of Communications Farjad Fazli	Absent
Vice President of Student Life Deron Hill	Excused Absence
Senior Class Representative Emilisa Trotman	Excused Absence
Junior Class Representative Dennis Nmecha	Absent
Sophomore Class Representative Christopher Priore	Absent

¹ Typically, minutes should only contain the essentials of a meeting. This includes the meeting time and location, a list of those who attended, as well as a record of all motions made and their outcome. Debate (or a summary of debate) is usually not included. I include it here at the request of the Chair. Mistakes and omissions are likely, so Senators are encouraged to e-mail the Secretary with corrections prior to the next Senate meeting, so that the record reflects what was actually said at the meeting and so corrections can be made efficiently.

Quorum established.

Agenda item 2.0: Announcements

The Chair announced that Treasurer Kirnbauer is currently handing out an asset grant, which was approved by the Budget Committee.

The Chair requested more notice when Senators have an excused absence.

The Chair announced that Senate reports are overdue from a number of Senators.

The Chair announced that President Maloof has issued Executive Order #008 – Ex Post Facto Veto of the NYPIRG contract. The veto message indicated that due to the fact that as Patrick Krug is no longer the Chair of NYPIRG’s Board of Directors, the contract is not valid.

Agenda item 3.0: Approval of the Minutes (10/27/2011 Meeting)

- Senator Adedapo moved that the minutes from the 10/27/2011 meeting be approved.
 - Motion approved by unanimous consent.

Agenda item 4.0: Special Services Council Recommendations

- Senator Gunther moved to suspend the rules to allow representatives of the SSC clubs to speak, in order to answer any questions posed by Senators.
 - Motion passed by a vote of 16-0-0. (Roll Call #1).

-Dumbledore’s Army:

- Senator Szeszler presented the grant application.
- Mission statement stated that the club is part of an international charity organization.
- Senator Simmons: What activities will be sponsored by your club?
 - Jordan Delfierro (Dumbledore’s Army representative): We usually have one big event per semester.
 - Senator Simmons: What are the “house points” mentioned in your constitution?
 - Mr. Delfierro: This is a way of getting club members to hang out and interact together.
- Senator Adams: Can you elaborate on some of your community service events?
 - Mr. Delfierro: We contacted the animal shelter in Stony Brook. We will have volunteers walk their dogs and do related tasks. We are also involved in ICON in the spring. We are trying to promote university unity.
- Senator Fanizza moved to approve Dumbledore’s Army for SSC recognition.
 - Motion approved by a vote of 17-0-0. (Roll Call #2).

-Neuroscience Axis:

- Senator Gunther made this presentation.
- Initially, this club was interested in Neuroscience specifically. As this would have opened the door for granting recognition to incredibly specific groups, we opened this club’s specialization to all facets of Biology.
- Senator Lau moved to approve Neuroscience Axis for SSC recognition.
 - Motion approved by a vote of 18-0-0. (Roll Call #3).

-Stony Brook Heals:

- Senator Gunther made this presentation.
- Stony Brook Heals' goal is to promote awareness. It is similar to an outreach program we have on campus. A representative is present to answer any questions.
- Senator Meier: Awareness of what?
 - Alok Joshi (Stony Brook Heals representative): We primarily want to help educate less fortunate children around the world. Our main goal is to raise awareness of conflict in Sierra Leone. We are trying to build a school in that country, to provide long-term benefit for children affected by conflict there. We want a long-term investment for them.
 - Senator Meier: Is it restricted to education in developing countries?
 - Mr. Joshi: No, we will also be providing those populations with clean water.
- Senator Santiago: Do you have any fundraising ideas?
 - Mr. Joshi: Yes, a singing and dancing event on November 18th, with the funds going to benefit this project. We also have a walk planned.
- President Maloof: Have you had a chance to look through the financial bylaws, to understand the USG fundraising restrictions?
 - Mr. Joshi: We have not at this time.
- Senator Rustemi moved to approve Stony Brook Heals for SSC recognition?
 - Senator Simmons: Point of inquiry. Could the Chair point out where in the Financial Bylaws the fundraising rules are discussed?
 - EVP Machalow indicated the appropriate sections in the Financial Bylaws.
 - On Senator Rustemi's motion to approve, the motion was approved by a vote of 19-0-0. (Roll Call #4).

Agenda item 5.0: Event Grants

-African Students Union

- Treasurer Kirnbauer presented the grant request.
- Normally, we would not accept event grants for events that have already happened. This event occurred on September 2, 2011.
- I encourage accepting this grant request, however, since there were problems on USG's part in the transition between administrative directors, which caused problems.
- President Maloof: Why do it through an event grant?
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: We do not typically give many appropriations bills to clubs, as that might show preference to that club. I believe handling it through an event grant would be more appropriate.
- Senator Fanizza moved to approve the African Students Union event grant for \$1596.
 - Motion approved by a vote of 18-0-1. (Roll Call #5).

-Bowling Club

- Treasurer Kirnbauer presented the event grant request.

- Standard event grant. This was submitted a long time ago, but was lost through the paperwork. The club did plan this event ahead of time.
- Senator Simmons moved to approve the Bowling Team event grant for \$863.52.
 - Motion approved by a vote of 19-0-0. (Roll Call #6).

-Cadence Step Team

- Treasurer Kirnbauer presented the event grant request.
- Standard grant.
- Senator Fanizza: Do we know how many cars are being taken, as the gas and toll expenses seem high?
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: We did not investigate this matter thoroughly in the Budget Committee.
- Senator Adams: To get an event grant, a club must demonstrate financial need. If you look at the Cadence Step Team's budget, they still have over \$400 in their budget. Should we only allocate what they need for this event, in excess of their budget?
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: That is for the Senate to decide. I did not look into this in detail at the time.
- Senator Simmons moved to approve the Cadence Step Team event grant for \$999.
 - Senator Simmons: As Tom was saying before, now is the best time to amend things.
 - President Maloof: I think that is very important. We should take steps now to correct everything, if we feel that is necessary.
 - Senator Adams moved to amend the event grant allocation from \$999 to \$579.50.
 - Senator Adams: The club still has a little over \$400 in their current budget, which should go into supporting this event. USG can cover the remaining funds required, which are \$579.50.
 - On the motion to amend, the motion was approved by a vote of 17-0-2. (Roll Call #7).
 - On the main motion, to approve the grant for \$579.50, the motion was approved by a vote of 19-0-0. (Roll Call #8).

-Stony Brook Ballroom Dance Team

- Treasurer Kirnbauer presented the event grant application.
- Standard trip to Columbia University, for a dance competition.
- Senator Tausz: The \$135 allocation for "gratuity" – is that under gifts?
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: This team chose to breakdown the budget request in this manner. Typically, coach bus fees will automatically include the gratuity. This is not a gift and is standard procedure.
 - EVP Machalow: My statement says that the event grant is for \$0. Is that correct?
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: No, I forgot to record that on the application correctly. On the Budget Committee minutes, it clearly states that the Budget Committee approved the request for \$1485.

- Senator Simmons moved to approve the Stony Brook Ballroom Dance Team event grant request for \$1485.
 - Motion passed by a vote of 19-0-0. (Roll Call #9).

-Stony Brook Gospel Choir

- Treasurer Kirnbauer presented this event grant request.
- The club requested \$6075 for this event, although under the rules they are only allowed to receive \$2000.
- The Budget Committee approved the request for \$2000.
- Senator Gunther moved to approve the event grant for Stony Brook Gospel Choir for \$2000.
 - The motion passed by a vote of 20-0-0. (Roll Call #10).

-Stony Brook Men's Rugby

- Senator Sohi made the event grant request.
- We went over this last meeting. The event requests funds for referees, tents, etc.
- Senator Fanizza moved to approve the Stony Brook Men's Rugby event grant request for \$2000.
 - The motion passed by a vote of 19-0-1. (Roll Call #11).

Agenda item 6.0: Asset Grants

-Men's Lacrosse

- Treasurer Kirnbauer presented the asset grant request.
- Men's Lacrosse requests \$3,619.63 for uniforms.
- After speaking to the team, we found out they only needed \$2270.
- The Budget Committee recommended approving the request in the amount of \$2270.
- Senator Gunther moved to approve the Men's Lacrosse asset grant in the amount of \$2270.
 - The motion passed by a vote of 20-0-0. (Roll Call #12).

-Cheerleading

- Chair: Prior to considering this asset grant, the Chair referred the Senate to Section 202 (Right to be fully informed on legislation.)
- Senator Adams moved to suspend the rules to allow the consideration for the Stony Brook Cheerleading asset grant.
 - Motion approved by a vote of 18-0-2. (Roll Call #13).
- Treasurer Kirnbauer: I completely forgot to bring this grant up for a vote. I apologize for the inconvenience.
 - Renovations were being done over the summer to the Cheerleading locker. After the end of summer, some of the uniforms were found to be missing.
 - This asset request is to recoup their losses from the summer and also for some additional men's uniforms.
 - The total amount requested is \$5306.85.
- Senator Tausz: Why was there such a close vote, as to whether or not to approve this grant in the Budget Committee?

- Senator Simmons: I do not know each Senator’s motivation, as the issue was not debated extensively.
- Senator Meier: I felt that the club could have resubmitted their grant to include additional items they needed.
- Senator Sohi: I voted against the request because it seemed to me that the uniforms might not be reused in future years.
- Senator Santiago: They also requested new uniforms because their current uniforms were not considered “collegiate” and they would not be eligible to participate in tournaments.
- President Maloof: Did Senator Meier speak about his concerns to the Cheerleading team?
 - Senator Meier: My concerns were alluded to but they were not completely addressed.
- Senator Fanizza: Just to back up Senator Maloof, we were concerned that the team did not use the asset grant to try to plan for the future, but merely to get money right now.
- Senator Tausz: Should we table this request in order to discuss these matters further?
 - Senator Santiago: I do not think that is a good idea, since they urgently need the uniforms.
- Senator Meier: Generally, clubs are not eligible for asset grants more than once per two years. If they do show need for additional uniforms before two years have elapsed, would they have any recourse to get more funds for that purpose?
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: I would not be in support of granting additional funds, as this would be in violation of the financial bylaws.
- Senator Szeszler moved to approve the Cheerleading team asset grant in the amount of \$5306.85.
 - Senator Tausz: Again, I would like to ask, is it worth not putting this off for a week, so we can address the concerns that arose?
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: I would say that if you were looking for pleasing these constituents, then I would not table this measure.
 - Senator Adams: Is the Cheerleading E-board aware of the asset grant rules?
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: I am confident that they know the rules.
 - On the motion to approve, the motion passed by a vote of 18-2-0. (Roll Call #14).

Agenda item 7.0: Confirmation of Event Programming Associate

- Senator Adams moved to suspend the rules, in order to allow the Administrative Director to speak.
 - Motion passed by a vote of 20-0-0. (Roll Call #15).
- Administrative Director: I am presenting Patrice Zapiti for the position of event programming associate.
 - Patrice has a lot of connections with performing groups and has done a good job in programming events in the past.
- Senator Adams moved to confirm Patrice Zapiti for the position of event programming associate.
 - Motion passed by a vote of 20-0-0. (Roll Call #16).

Agenda item 8.0: Confirmation of Events Management Director

- EVP Machalow left the Chair. PPT Simmons in the Chair
- EVP Machalow: I wanted to bring someone new for this position. This nominee is competent and will be able to effectively perform the duties of the position.
- Senator Fanizza moved to confirm Argyrios Pappas for the position of Events Management Director.
 - The nominee was confirmed by a vote of 19-0-0. (Roll Call #17).
- At the conclusion of this agenda item, PPT Simmons left the Chair and EVP Machalow returned to the Chair.

Agenda item 9.0: Office of Communications Graphic Designer Act

- Senator Adams presented the act.
- We put in a hiring process whereby the President nominates a candidate and the Senate confirms.
- The position would be paid \$11/hr.
- Senator Fanizza: You also changed the fact that this position can be filled by a student. Why is that?
 - Senator Adams: I felt that as the Undergraduate Student Government, we should not be denying jobs to competent students, should any exist to fill this role.
- Senator Sohi: I don't understand the part where the President has discretion to state whether or not this job needs to be filled.
 - Senator Adams: I feel that there is no problem, as we should not be forcing the President to fill this position if the President feels it unnecessary.
- Senator Moore: Do you feel that 20 hours per week is too much just for the position of graphic design?
 - Senator Adams: Almost all of our employees are capped at 20 hours per week, perhaps to avoid having to pay fringe benefits.
- Senator Simmons moved to approve the Office of Communications Graphic Designer Act.
 - Senator Gunther: Seeing as how the President already has a significant amount of responsibilities, and the person would work primarily under the VP of Communications.
- Senator Gunther moved to amend Section 2, Line 1, to strike "The President" and replace with "The Vice President of Communications" in the two instances in which the term occurs.
 - Senator Moore: I agree with the reasoning, but I think it seems odd that the VP of Communications would be in charge of the decision. I believe that doing so would give no incentive for the VP of Communications not to have additional staff.
 - Senator Adams: I agree with Senator Moore's opinion.
 - President Maloof: I do not think it is a good idea to allow the VP of Communications to be in a position where they can choose to do less work and have someone working under them who is paid more.
 - Chair: I would like to point out Article III, Section 1, E, 1, h. of the USG Constitution, which states that the President, in consultation with the PPT, should make all USG appointments.

- Senator Sohi: I think it would be better for the VP of Communications to make the appointments.
- Senator Simmons: I think that the President, as the highest officer of the Executive Branch, should be responsible for appointments.
- Senator Adams: I believe that passing this amendment would make the legislation unconstitutional. I urge Senators to vote it down.
- On Senator Gunther's amendment: Motion failed by a vote of 2-18-0.
- Senator Lau: Typically, graphic designers are paid \$20 per hour or more.
- Senator Moore: Does the President believe that the position would be necessary this year?
 - President Maloof: I believe the position would be necessary this year. Our VP of Communications does not have the technical skills for making the fliers at the quality we would like. He is more adept at disseminating information, writing legislation, etc.
- Senator Fanizza: Is this bill needed because our current VP of Communications is not up to par with respect to his abilities?
 - President Maloof: I believe few people our age have expertise in every single component of the VP of Communication's job.
 - Senator Fanizza: Then we should have this position on a permanent basis.
- Senator Gunther: Seeing the level of events that we are putting on, I support Senator Sohi's assertion that we should have this position on a permanent basis.
- Senator Simmons: What if we do have an exceptional VP of Communications who is excellent at the graphic design component? Senator Sohi's assertion would force us to hire someone even under those circumstances.
- Senator Adams: I do not see a need to change anything in this bill. There would be flexibility for the President to hire or fire a graphic designer, based on need at the time.
- Senator Sohi: If this is passed as-is, and the President deemed it necessary to have a graphic designer, and then later felt the position was not needed, can this person then be fired, and a new person nominated at a later time?
 - Senator Adams: As the legislation states, the holder of the position would serve at the pleasure of the President.
- Senator Lau: I am looking at the job description of the VP of Communications. It does not state that they must be proficient in Photoshop or make excellent fliers. I believe that this job would be good in assisting the VP of Communications.
- Senator Sohi moved to amend Section 2, Line 1, to strike the line and insert: "The President shall nominate a competent student, in consultation with the Vice President of Communications, to serve as the Graphic Designer."
- Senator Bibby: I think it is unfair to say that a student cannot possibly be as talented as a non-student.
- Senator Sohi: I would like to amend my amendment, such that it would now strike line 1 of Section 2, to now state: "The President shall nominate a competent student or non-student, in consultation with the Vice President of Communications, to serve as the Graphic Designer."
 - On the tertiary motion (amendment to the amendment): Passed 13-7-0. (Roll Call #19).

