

VSA Council Minutes
February 1, 2009

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00PM.

2. Attendance

Proxies: Joss, Raymond, 2010.

Guests: Andrew Bennett (Student Asst. to the President), Matthew Brock (Misc), Brian Farkas (Misc), Julianne Herts (Misc), Emma Mitchell (Misc), Molly Turpin (Misc), Anabel Graff (ViCE), Maria Melnik, Tali Swisher, Sarah Goodell, Amanda Giglio, Deshawn Subidi.

3. Announcements

a. Election Dates

The VP for Operations moved to approve the Spring Election dates for 2009:

3. Reports

a. ViCE Report

Anabel Graff, ViCE Chair, reported that this weekend's BEIRUT concert was a great success. She also expressed excitement for the upcoming semester's programming.

b. Committee Report – CLRG

Mary-Catherine Halfpenny reported that CLRG held a Conversation Dinner on shared governance on November 20th; while attendance could have been better, the meeting was productive in that it allowed facilitators to implement a new strategy of taking notes during events to post information online. "Soup and Substance", CLRG's informal discussion events, have been going well, but have also been sparsely attended, and the committee hopes that its new "Cocoa Chat" programs will attract more students. Currently, CLRG is focused on planning for All College Day, which will feature last year's mural project, among other activities and events. Finance suggested that CLRG utilize email to spread the word about its discussion groups.

c. Committee Report – CMPC

CMPC's representative announced that the committee will be meeting again this month to discuss its upcoming projects. The President explained that CMPC has had to recently scale back its plans and focus on "the bare necessities" when budgeting for next year.

d. Committee Report – Library

The VP for Academics reported that the committee will be meeting this Thursday, and that its fall semester conversations focused on the ways in which the financial crisis impacts the library. The committee has concluded that preserving the library's scholarly publications is a priority, but has opted to eliminate the \$75,000 binding budget for next year. Per student input, the committee also decided to keep the library's hours extended through study and exam periods. Currently under discussion is the issue of whether to update the browser or to select a new one entirely, but financial concerns may make an update more feasible.

e. Committee Report – CCL

According to Main, CCL's representative, the committee seems to be much more active this year than in previous years. He explained that Chris Roellke has done "a great job" leading the group, and that his strategy of forming subcommittees has been very effective; the subcommittees currently in place are: Security Advisory, ZipCar, Student Rights and Regulations, Alcohol Use and Abuse, and College Regulations Handbook and Revisions. CCL will begin meeting in its various subcommittees this week, and members will soon have a clearer idea of the committee's plans for the semester.

f. Activities

The VP for Activities announced that she plans to take "a very active" approach this semester in terms of "following up on events that [she's] concerned about", explaining that orgs devote great time and funds to planning, and she wants to ensure that their programs go well. The Activities Committee will soon be sending out a survey about nighttime and weekend activities to gain a clearer sense of how students choose to spend their time; ideally, this will help VSA orgs with future programming. The committee is also hoping to make some positive changes in the realm of org certification, and will be taking ideas from last Saturday's VSA Council retreat to formulate Bylaws amendments.

The VP for Activities was also concerned that The Mug has not been fully operational in the last couple of weeks. 2009 expressed his opinion that The Mug works better when run by students. Activities agreed that "the system needs to be streamlined", and explained that she will be meeting with Meghan Haberman this week to discuss ways in which operations might be improved.

g. Finance

The VP for Finance presented a spreadsheet displaying the current status of all VSA funds. He noted that he received at least 20 strong fund applications within the last week, and that the resulting allocations will likely deplete "most of the VSA funds". Capital budgeting applications will be available next week, and orgs will have one week to complete them; the fund will have \$15,000 available this semester.

5. Allocation of \$2000 from Speakers/Lectures/Panels to Filmmakers

The VP for Finance moved to allocate \$2000 from Speakers/Lectures/Panels to the Vassar Filmmakers. The Filmmakers have invited Albert Magels, a documentary filmmaker focused on social issues, to come speak this semester. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

6. Allocation of \$950 from Speakers/Lectures/Panels to FWA

The VP for Finance moved to allocate \$950 from Speakers/Lectures/Panels to FWA for its upcoming workshop with Susan Blackwell, a Broadway actress and writer. All were in favor of the allocation, and the motion passed.

7. Appointment of Maria Melnik as Founder's Day Co-Chair

The VP for Operations moved to appoint Maria Melnik as Founder's Day Co-Chair, explaining that there had been two other strong applications for the position; both Maria Melnik and Tali Swisher, another applicant, were present to discuss their applications with the Council. As both seemed enthusiastic and dedicated to the position, Finance moved to amend the motion to appoint both Tali and Maria as Co-Chairs. Cushing moved to call to question; 2009 was not in

favor, though all others were, and the motion passed. 2009 and strong were not in favor, though all others were in favor, and the motion passed. All were in favor of the revised motion, and it passed.

8. Appointment of Deshawn Subidi to Long-Term Planning Committee for Technology.

The VP for Operations moved to appoint Deshawn Subidi to the Long-Term Technology and Planning Committee. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

9. Endorsement of U.S. PIRG HR585 Letter

The President moved to approve a letter to Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Majority Leader Harry Reid that expresses support for higher education funding in the stimulus bill. 2009 was concerned about the notion of taking what he felt was a “political” stance, particularly as the time-sensitive nature of the issue would prevent VSA Council members from polling their constituents. Finance supported the letter, but was also concerned about setting a precedent by endorsing this kind of document. All but TAs and 2009 were in favor of endorsing the letter, and the motion passed.

9. Open Discussion

- 2009 announced that 112 days remained until graduation.
- Student Life explained that he is in the process of investigating the parking situation in the THs, and will report back to Council once he has more information.

13. Adjourn

The meeting concluded at 7:00 PM.