

**VSA Council Minutes**  
*February 24, 2008*

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 PM.

**2. Attendance**

Guests: Adam Accardo (NSO), Andrew Bennett, Brian Farkas (Miscellany News), Mike Fernandez (Christian Fellowship), Rachel Glicksman, Garrett King, Elizabeth Mermel, Maggie Negrete, Acacia O'Connor (Miscellany News), Kaitlin Riddle, Caitlin Rinn (NSO), Sam Rosen-Amy (Miscellany News), Sally Slade (NSO), Bonnie Velez (PL).

**3. Consent Agenda**

**a. Minutes from February 17**

No objections were made, and the consent agenda was adopted as presented.

**4. Reports**

**a. Campus Investor Responsibility**

A representative from CIRC reported that the committee met last on Monday, which was their only meeting since their last report. At the meeting they addressed two main issues, the first of which was deciding a policy for students who wanted to attend CIRC meetings—an issue that arose after several specific requests. The committee decided that allowing non-members to attend did not make much sense, as all of the relevant information from meetings could be attained from talking to a member of CIRC. Any future requests to attend meetings will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

The second issue addressed was Kick Coke's proposal to ban all Coke products on campus. The committee began investigating Coke's labor practices, specifically in the countries of India and Colombia. They found that Coke indeed used socially irresponsible practices in India, specifically related to water treatment in the area. There is not yet enough information about labor practices in Colombia to make a decision, but the committee will be looking at a United Nations investigation regarding Coke to come to a decision. The college has been meeting with Coke since last May to discuss their practices that may be irresponsible, and is looking at how other colleges have acted to pressure Coke to use more responsible labor practices.

**b. Disability Issues**

A representative reported that the committee has not met as a whole since their last report, but that her Education and Awareness subcommittee has met. They discussed teacher workshops, hosting movie screenings, and tabling at All College Day. They are also involved with a group on campus that brings students with disabilities to local schools in order to educate children about the resources available on campus. Upon a question from Council about other subcommittees, the representative responded that she was aware of another subcommittee for Building Accessibility that has been working with planning committees for new buildings.

**c. Campus Master Planning**

The Campus Master Planning representative reported that there has been a problem with graffiti on campus and around the community, and requested that anyone who sees graffiti to report it to Buildings & Grounds. Additionally, B&G has been getting a high amount of questions about energy and heating in buildings; all such information is available on the B&G website.

The new Town Houses will almost certainly not be ready for Fall of 2008, due to a tension between time-conscious construction and the actual quality of the new buildings. As a result, the college has confirmed 24 spaces at the local Days Inn, with more space available to be saved. The college had considered using rooms at the Alumni House, but there were problems involved with fire code.

The college is also considering the issues involved with having contractors on campus. When Davison is closed, there will be up to 150 contractors on campus every day, including 150 ratty looking pick-up trucks—which will likely create a parking crunch. This is in addition to the 20-40 parking spaces that will be lost due to construction around Davison. They are considering fencing out a space on Joss Beach for parking, and creating more spaces across from South Commons. The issue of new parking locations is a contentious issue. Also under discussion is the staging area necessary for Davison construction, which will include trailers for offices and storage of materials.

Another issue being addressed by the college is more effective storm water management, in response to floods around campus. There is a project to create new water lines, and to construct a storm management system, which would take care of the most troublesome areas (such as the entrance to the ACDC). The plan to deal with water management is a ten-year plan, and the college is currently working to compile a list of the campus's most troubling water areas.

Other issues currently under discussion are: the ongoing plan to place street signs and numbers around campus; the 49-year lease recently signed by Vassar for the local stores outside campus; the new landscape planner enlisted by the college; discontent from the Town of Poughkeepsie about athletic games and practices on sports fields nearby. In response to a question from Joss, the representative explained that there is very little the college can do to avoid obtrusive noise from Davison construction next year.

#### **d. Exec Report (Academics)**

After a community discussion that occurred three weeks ago, Academics is considering a proposal to recommend requirements for education of "social justice" to students. The proposal will consider what other colleges already have that may be similar. Academics will also be meeting with faculty to discuss a proposal that would disband majors committees as they currently exist, to be replaced with academic interest groups, which would allow non-leaders to take part in programming decisions.

VSA President and Academics were also supposed to attend the Chairs and Directors meeting, to discuss general academic concerns that exist for students. The three main issues that they want to convey are the roles of multidisciplinary programs, frequency of class offerings, and the timing of classes. The meeting was cancelled due to the snowstorm, and will be rescheduled for March 28.

Academics has met with the head of the Student Athlete committee to discuss having local students come on campus as part of an athletic program. CCP hasn't met in a couple weeks, and they will likely be discussing 2-2, by taking several teachers' specific schedules and looking at them as case studies. By doing this they hope to uncover some general larger curricular issues.

The Library committee met last week, discussing the library's hours over Spring Break, and the lack of available and accessible study spaces on campus. The CAPA meeting discussed the incoming class, including a discussion of the cap that was put in place. They are also in discussions of local high schools now that President Hill has made the announcement about the new scholarship program. There are discussions to host a

"Mind the Gap"-type event for local high school students. Finally, the Art Library is going to be renovated, to take care of signage issues.

**e. Gender-Neutral Housing**

The Student Life committee was told on Tuesday that gender-neutral housing would not be occurring for next year. There was no official report from the Senior Officers, but they did in fact meet to discuss the issue. They decided to hold off because of a need for a broader discussion about the issue, and they expressed concern that there was not enough housing room to allow students to get out of the situation if they hadn't been thinking clearly in making their decisions. ResLife will possibly have a temporary policy for individual applications to be submitted for gender-neutral housing.

**5. Certification of Gaming Club**

Activities moved to certify the Gaming Club. No one from the organization was present at the meeting to discuss the group's application. A member of NSO reported on the reason for fellow members feeling the need to break from NSO and create their own organization. 2010 moved to postpone consideration of the certification until the next VSA meeting on March 2. Council engaged in a discussion of whether to consider the certification at this meeting, or wait until a member of the group was present.

Main, 2011, and Noyes voted not in favor of postponement; everyone else voted in favor, and the motion passed to postpone consideration until March 2.

**6. Allocation of \$2170 from Speaker's Fund to SAU**

Finances moved to allocate \$2170 from the Speaker's Fund to the Student Activist Union. All of Council voted in favor of the allocation, and the motion passed.

**7. Allocation of \$1165 from Collaboration to Joss**

Finances moved to allocate \$1165 from the Collaboration Fund to Joss. Joss moved to amend the allocation to \$1202.50. Joss and Main abstained from the vote, all else of Council voted in favor of the amendment, and the motion passed.

Joss and Main abstained from voting on the allocation, all else of Council voted in favor of the allocation, and the motion passed.

**8. Transfer of Funds**

Finances, on behalf of the Executive Board, moved to allocate \$2107.25 from the Great Works Fund to the Conference Fund. All of Council voted in favor of the allocation, and the motion passed.

**9. Allocation of \$450 from Conference to French Club**

Finances moved to allocate \$450 from the Conference Fund to the French Club. All of Council voted in favor of the allocation, and the motion passed.

**10. Allocation of \$100 from Conference to Poder Latin@**

Finances moved to allocate \$100 from the Conference Fund to Poder Latin@. All of Council voted in favor of the allocation, and the motion passed.

**11. Allocation of \$150 from Conference to Christian Fellowship**

Finances moved to allocate \$150 from the Conference Fund to the Christian Fellowship. Council engaged in an extensive discussion regarding the magnitude of the allocation. Noyes

moved to amend the allocation to \$300. Only Academics and Operations voted not in favor, and the motion passed. The allocation then became \$300.

All of Council voted in favor of the allocation, and the motion passed.

#### **12. Allocation of \$300 from Conference to SAU**

Finances moved to allocate \$300 from the Conference Fund to the Student Activist Union. All of Council voted in favor of the allocation, and the motion passed.

#### **13. Allocation of \$957.25 from Conference to Operation Donation**

Finances moved to allocate \$957.25 from the Conference Fund to Operation Donation. Activities abstained from the vote, all else of Council voted in favor of the allocation, and the motion passed.

#### **14. Allocation of \$1653 from Capital Contingency to WVKR**

Finances moved to allocate \$1653 from the Capital Contingency Fund to WVKR. All of Council voted in favor of the allocation, and the motion passed.

#### **15. Freezing of Ski Team Organizational Activity**

Activities moved to freeze the activity of the Ski Team. The President clarified that freezing the activity means that the organization is unable to reserve space, schedule events, or request funds. All of Council voted in favor of the freezing, and the motion passed.

#### **16. Announcement of Fines**

Finances announced that the Vassar Filmmakers has been fined \$50 for making a contract before having event approval, and thus forcing Activities to approve an event that would have otherwise not been approved.

#### **17. Amendments to Articles V and VII of the VSA Constitution**

Operations moved to amend Articles V and VII of the VSA Constitution.

Ferry moved to amend the part of the amendment that entails the persons to whom Ferry must report information. Cushing moved to call the secondary amendment to question; all of Council voted in favor, and the motion was called to question. All of Council except Ferry voted not in favor, and the amendment failed.

Ferry moved to amend Article VII, Section 1, to strike the last sentence from the amendment.

Lathrop moved to consider multiple options regarding Ferry's secondary amendment. Academics moved to call the consideration of multiple options to question; all of Council voted in favor, and the motion passed. Only THs, Lathrop, and Activities voted in favor of considering multiple options, and the motion failed.

Cushing moved to call the amendment to question; all of Council voted in favor, and the motion passed. Only Ferry voted in favor of the amendment, and the motion failed.

Ferry moved to table the amendment indefinitely. Only Ferry voted in favor of the motion to table, and the motion failed.

Activities moved to refer the amendment back to the CRC for reconsideration. Activities moved to call the referral to question. Student Life, 2010, Noyes, Main, SoCo, and Operations voted not in favor; all else of Council voted in favor, and the motion passed.

### **Vote to Refer the Amendment to CRC:**

*Abstentions:* None.

*Not in Favor:* Main, Noyes, TA, Operations, Ferry, Student Life, Finance, Joss.

*In favor:* 2011, Strong, TH, Town Students, 2009, Activities, Academics, SoCo, Cushing, 2010, Davison, 2008, Jewett, Raymond, Lathrop.

**Result:** By a vote of 15-8, the motion passed.

Ferry left the meeting at 9:38pm.

### **17.5. Amendments to Articles I of the VSA Bylaws**

Operations moved to amend Article I, Section 6 of the VSA Bylaws.

Activities moved to amend sentences E and F, to add "without a designated proxy" after the words "Council member." Activities later withdrew the proposed amendment, and President withdrew the original motion in order to refer the amendments back to CRC.

### **18. Amendments to Article VII of the VSA Bylaws**

VSA President made a motion to amend Article VII of the VSA Bylaws, which relate to election scheduling. There are two amendments to Section 2, as presented by the Constitutional Review Committee. He briefly explained the problems in the timing of elections in relation to Davison house draw, and the necessity for amending the VSA Bylaws that dictate the timing of elections. The amendments will be voted on next week.

### **19. Allocation of \$50 from Social Programming to FPT**

Finances moved to allocate \$50 from the Social Programming Fund to Forum for Political Thought. All of Council voted in favor of the allocation, and the motion passed.

### **20. Open Discussion**

- 2008 announced that 91 days remain until commencement.
- One of Time's Persons of the Year is holding a lecture in Rocky 300 on Tuesday at 7pm.
- VSA President announced that he would be off-campus Thursday through Sunday for an out-of-town Trustees meeting.
- Town Students announced that the CRC meeting would be on Friday, and encouraged VSA Council members to attend to give a voice on the new amendments to the Bylaws.
- Town Students announced that there would be a general interest meeting for Founders Day, and encouraged attendants.
- Joss announced that Heaven and Hell would be the coming weekend in the Villard Room.
- Activities announced that the V-Cash machines had arrived, and the reservation form for usage of the machines is on the VSA website. Decisions on usage of the machines will be made on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Operations announced that the CCT meeting times have changed, and Council needs a new representative because Main is now unable to attend.
- Student Life announced that House presidents should have received an email from the head of the Food Committee, and requested that the presidents relay the email's information to their constituencies.
- Cushing reported that Mazel Tov Matthew was very successful, and expressed gratitude to the Davison House Team. He also encouraged more houses to start new events.

**21. Adjourn**

The meeting concluded at 10:01pm.