

VASSAR STUDENT ASSOCIATION

Council Minutes for April 21, 2013

“You’ve got to gather up what you need, you’ve got to choose a direction, and when the moment is right for you,
you gotta go”

-You Got to Go, Above and Beyond

1 Call to Order

-The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

2 AttendanceOperations

-All here except Student Life.

3 Consent Agenda

a. \$1600 from Discretionary to Islamic Society

b. \$160 from Preorgs to Matthew's Archers

c. \$2150 from Community to Shakespeare Troupe

d. \$300 from Discretionary to Davison

e. \$200 from Preorgs to SEASA

f. \$0 from Conference to Slow Food

g. Minutes from 4/14 meeting

-Joss made a motion to move item f. to item 6 on the agenda.

-The rest of the agenda was adopted with all in favor.

4 Executive Board Reports

a. Activities.....(7 min)

-They are picking on Tuesday from the Programming Board. The last Activities meeting is this week.

b. Finance.....(7 min)

-They have issued the first draft of the budget. They only got three appeals so they feel good about their budgeting. They will make another draft for next week. They did a lot of trimming of internal orgs into funds like the Speakers Fund that always need more money.

5 A Resolution for Public Health and Safety Regarding Indian Point Nuclear Plant

.....Jansyn Thaw (15 min)

-They are the environmental justice interns at Clear Water in Beacon. Governor Cuomo among others is trying to update the health standards of the plant as it goes up for renewed license for 25 years. It's a 35 minute drive away and could have effects on Vassar. People think that the evacuation zone should be increased to 40 miles which would include Vassar.

Currently NY isn't prepared for this size of evacuation. Also, any natural disasters or other problems with the plant could cause it to be unsafe. They are using organizations like the VSA to sign a petition that will encourage the plant to make changes via the governor and the nuclear regulatory commission (a federal bureau that makes decisions about health standards).

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-THs asked if they’re asking for administrative support. They will hopefully ask for support after getting the students’ approval.

-2015 asked if Council usually sends things to governors. Is this too political?

-Joss made a motion to table this to Operations since there is a very confusing relationship between the VSA and the administration/trustees.

-2015 said she would rather see it tabled to Student Life. She’d like to see more discussion on it.

-TAs thinks it wouldn’t be helpful to take it to Student Life because it isn’t a VSA resolution so it can’t be changed.

-Joss thinks they could decide to recommend this immediately as the student body or recommend it to the President.

-2015 would feel more comfortable talking about it with her constituents for another week.

-Socos thinks that it makes a statement to pass it on behalf of the student body instead of passing it to the college administration.

-Lathrop agreed.

-Jewett made a motion to call it to question. This passed with Joss and 2015 not in favor.

-This motion passed with a majority.

6 \$0 from Conference to Slow Food

-They applied to the Conference Fund for a conference that happens every couple years. The only opportunity they have to network and meet with others in their growing movement is at this conference. They are asking for \$1350 which is reduced and they understand that this is during the tail end of the academic year, but it is still during finals.

-Joss noted that they couldn’t fund it because of their policies. He asked what kinds of tools they hope to bring back that will serve the Vassar community. Meghan, the senior member attending, will be facilitating the connections she has made over the years. They facilitate leadership skills and workshops that help with networking etc.

-Activities feels conflicted about it because Campus Activities refuses to hold events after classes have ended. However, since it’s off campus he feels torn about it. He wanted to warn against events during study week and finals.

-Allison asked if the application says anything about this policy. No, the application is bad. They hope to improve this. Finance is nervous about using this precedent for allowing other summer events.

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-Lathrop asked about the difference between finals week and summer. The VSA usually shuts down so they think of them as the same, but this decision is unprecedented and Council can decide now.

-Meghan noted that none of them have finals and it’s off campus so it won’t distract.

-2016 noted that exceptions shouldn’t be made to this rule and asked why the application is asking for four when they originally said three. One of them couldn’t come for personal reasons.

-Next year’s executive person is approving events that this year’s executive board will deal with.

-2015 made a motion to allocate \$0 to Slow Foods. Finance is also in favor of \$0.

-Lathrop asked about multiple options.

-Someone asked about giving them less; would they be able to fundraise? They would like at least \$600 to cover their registration fees.

-2015 noted that this is a precedent they are setting, the amount doesn’t matter.

-There is approx. \$7,000 in the Conference Fund.

-THs said that their precedent doesn’t matter and asked about the other applications Finance mentioned as coming down the pipeline. He clarified that there are a few other conferences off campus during finals that people have applied for.

-Ferrry asked why they haven’t written a policy that goes through the end of finals because during senior week wouldn’t be fair because everyone wouldn’t be there, but finals makes sense. He wonders about the Executive Boards’ opinions on activities during study week. Activities is against it.

-Finance discourages YOLO mode. Stay rationale.

-Joss made a motion to call to question the motion. This passed with a majority.

-The motion to allocate \$0 failed by one vote.

-Operations made a motion to allocate \$600 to Slow Food. She thinks this is a procedural mess and because the rules weren’t accessible anywhere they shouldn’t punish the org for it. The Conference meets their mission statement, it’s not a huge strain on their budget, and they’ve lowered the money.

-TAs feels that the way they’ve been discussing this is very cavalier and disrespectful to the people here.

-2016 said that if they’re going to allocate money then they should allocate what they need. But he wants them to think about the point of sending people to conferences as bringing it back and he’s worried about the senior. Meghan spoke that she started the chapter and it’s to facilitate their development.

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- Activities is still worried about this precedent.
 - Finance is worried that although they were able to compromise this amount, they might not be able to do so with other applications in the future.
 - Josh made the point that list serves and Skype don’t stop over the summer so that people can still talk and they can still pass on the information.
 - 2015 thinks they should give them \$1350 because they would do this in Finance Committee. She made a motion to consider multiple options. This passed with a majority.
 - They voted on \$1350, \$600, or \$0. The motion to allocate \$1350 passed with a majority.
- 7 Declaration of Open Positions.....Operations (5 min)
- Board of Elections co-chairs. 2015 class secretary, Davison 2015 Rep for fall, Noyes 2015 Rep, Raymond 2015 Rep, Soco Treasurer, Soco programming director, and a few others.
 - Joss would like a class council so encourage your constituents to apply.
- 8 VSA Executive Board Stipend Proposal.....Student Life (15 min)
- The game plan is to table it to next week in Student Life. Joss asked about a resolution. It’s the same thing as this. Does this restrict the students who aren’t on financial aid from getting a stipend?
 - Student Employment would have to be in charge of this as a work study position. If a student gets work study then they would get paid, if not then no.
 - There is a means to creating this position. They are working with student employment and they seem receptive.
 - Activities asked about hours. The stipend isn’t related to the hours you spend so even if you work 30 hours you get paid for 10.
 - THs noted that they will be talking about it here and in Student Life tomorrow at 4. Thanks for bringing it in.
 - Tewa asked about having another job. This would allow you to keep your other work study job.
 - 2015 asked if they are going to fill out the form to create a position. Operations noted that it’s like HSAs and they get ten hours a week. The representative is sure that there is a means.
 - Main thanked them for all of their work. No regrets, but his future could have changed.
 - Activities remembers seeing Judicial Board Chair as an Executive Board position in the documents. It’s not anymore.
- 9 An Amendment Concerning VSA Policies.....Operations (15 min)
- This changed a little so that the wording is clearer. This passed with all in favor.

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10 Student Space.....President (10 min)

-President talked about the Student Space alternative. They are thinking about extending Retreat hours. They are considering opening up the east room of ACDC for late night options of hot food. UpC would then no longer exist. Paying for it would probably be more like paying for by item and they could maybe do a meal equivalency thing.

-Activities thinks that this would help a lot for orgs because UpC would be open more for events and it’s already a really popular place to get. It would alleviate programming pressure.

-2016 looked into this and noted that a lot of our peer institutions have places where you can get hot food late at night. He thinks the students would respond very popularly to this change. Williams paid for it with their student government money.

-Noyes asked why this is logistically easier than opening the Retreat longer. President will ask.

-2013 thinks they should call it EastC and asked if they could do a trial period. Maybe.

-2014 was on Student Space Committee and thinks that giving students a space to meet late at night isn’t necessarily met with opening the East room. Also students don’t necessarily like the Deece food anyway.

-Davison asked if the food would be Deece food. It’s unsure still, but it would be different because it would be a la cart.

-Academics felt that the people living in senior housing wouldn’t find this appealing because it’s not very accessible or a place that she frequents.

-THs asked why this is logistically easier than keeping the Retreat open. She doesn’t think that people will go pay for Deece food.

-Lathrop asked about calling it a Wellness space. Would they lose UpC as a wellness space?

-Finance noted that the Deece recently changed from a la cart to all you can eat and this is an opportunity to talk about these changes.

11 Open Discussion

-2013:36 days until Commencement. The official senior week schedule will be released on Wednesday. It won’t have pricing, but dates and times will be there. The student gift is doing all of its gift stuff and he’s handing out gift envelopes.

-Joss talked about the resolution he’ll be bringing to Council next week. The college took shared governance out of their mission statement without student input and he thinks they should condemn them.

-Operations clarified that they are revising the governance and taking a lot out because they are getting accredited and need to be less confusing. The mission statement was three pages and they’ve consolidated it to one paragraph. They took out that the college used to be a

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women’s college as well as the student governance piece. Half of the administration also isn’t in the Governance.

-Joss thinks the important thing is that leaving the shared governance only in the handbook is not ok.

-Finance noted that they haven’t actually removed shared governance from how the college functions because we still have student positions on college committees.

-Jewett asked about the probability of them putting shared governance back in. Literally none.

-Governance is divided into defining the trustees’ jobs, the administrators’ jobs, how faculty members are appointed and the tenure track. It basically speaks to how the college works as a whole. Things aren’t as specific in the governance as in the VSA bylaws, but it’s all the same.

-Ferry asked how long we’ve had shared governance. No one knows for sure, but a while.

-This was tabled.

-2016 talked about the organization challenge for the student gift. If 100% of your Exec Board gives then you’re entered to win a pizza party. VSA Council and House teams all have to contribute.

-Jewett noted that there is a resolution attached about VSA policies.

-Body Positive is coming to Vassar this weekend which is a 3 day workshop starting on Friday.

-Joss wanted to note that the reason he wrote this resolution is to fight for having it defined somewhere.

-President thinks that he doesn’t understand shared governance.

-Davison is having a Thrift Shop party this weekend.

-Academics wanted to say that although Joss is passionate about shared governance that the mission statement is not the place to do this.

-Main made a motion to adjourn. This passed with all in favor except 2015. The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.