 

**MEETING MINUTES**

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**Date: 03/25/22**

**Topic: Public Meeting/Deliberations**

**Present:**

**- Voting members:** Warren Sipe, Noah Robertson, Sean Terrey, Najee Rodriguez, Claire Kelling, Xiaoru Shi, Latisha Franklin, Megan Minnich, Jake Snyder, Nora Van Horn, Erin Boas, Schönn Franklin

**- Nonvoting members:** Yidi Wang, Alexa Clayton, Barry Bram, Jolinda Wilson,

**Absent:**

**Agenda:**

1. **Call to Order and Opening Roll Call**

*Meeting called to order at 4:03 a.m.*

1. **Adoption of the Agenda**

*Motioned, seconded, no objections.*

1. **Adoption of the Minutes (March 21, 2022)**

*Motioned, seconded, no objections.*

1. **Public Comment**

*Kayla: When coming to PSU, I was lucky enough to get Covid-19 relief. We don’t want to worry about dropping out or taking money from back home*

*Molly: SAB concerns There is a substantial number of students that can benefit from more aid. It would allow so many families and students to have opportunities to succeed. It is important we do what is best for all students*

*Caroline: Voice my opinion about the student poverty unit. Their need is real and urgent. There is more than one avenue to help this issue. PSU finds millions of dollars for athletics and emplo9yees and I find it hard that some of our support has to come from the student fee. We are all working toward the same goal for all students.*

*Sonika: It is appalling that some administers make 6 figures but it’s hard to find money for our students. The University should be doing more. I completely support institutional support toward helping with student poverty*

*Gabriel: The actions that the SFB have taken recently are appalling. As someone who has known many people who have served on the Student Fee Board, I have always seen this body as a philanthropic and caring group that would allow the myriad of organizations on campus to pursue whatever they choose. This is the legacy that you find yourselves apart of. So, when it came to my attention that you blocked the hearing for SABOSP, I was revolted. I physically cannot understand how you can look at the masses of students from low-socioeconomic and decide that their wellbeing was less important than your petty disagreements. As a first-generation student who chose a different college originally because I physically could not and cannot afford college, I would rather you spit in my face than make decisions like this, because that would legitimately bother me less. To the students who voted yes, thank you for championing for Penn State students. I challenge you to look at an impoverished students and tell them they can’t have food. So, either fix this or get out of the way so people who care about the entirety of the Penn state community can step in, you privileged and self-serving cowards.*

*Caitlyn: I am a current graduate student at Penn State. I joined the student advisory board for student poverty. I babysit which helps me fund being at Penn State. I hope you don’t misconstrue your choices to help the university because this week you did not. You dismantled a crafted proposals before giving a hearing a chance. Your mission statements became empty promises. You spoiled your relationship with hundreds of students whose trust you have lost. All eyes are on you.*

*Patrick: I am asking you to reconsider your decision about the student poverty. The plan is well thought out. Not hearing the plan in the first place is close minded and unfair to the people who created it*

*Will: I am reaching out for the unit that addresses student poverty. There is an unsettling number that have poverty in their daily lives. I hope the SFB realized people looking for their next meal have been let down. The funds for this plan would be totally utilized.*

*Daniel: While I understand the rationale, hundreds of students need this. I urge you to reconsider*

*Jenal: I come from parents who are Haitian immigrants. I have been lucky enough to not have to deal with poverty. Just because you haven’t faced poverty, doesn’t mean you have the right to say no. There are hundreds if not thousands who have to work their way through college. The best we can do it give them a face. Recently, the black caucus put together baskets to give back to students. Someone on the Fee Board voted no but also participated in this donation drive. This person on the Fee Board who voted no, who also serves on the Gender Equity Coalition, displayed that they don’t care about the goals of their organization. I support the message behind the student equity, but this person makes me concerned about their need for political gain*

*Sam: I think its pretty laughable that this meeting is coming at 8 in the morning at such an inaccessible time for students. I think to vote no on this matter, especially when you have done things contradicting your note and I think this is equal to spitting in the faces of impoverished students. We need to teach students that we have something worth fighting for*

*Bailey: I have come into meeting people who suffer from poverty. PSU’s finances are fine, and they have reserves and don’t reward enough student aid. The idea that students are asked to front the costs for student’s issue is egregious. Grad students make wages that place the majority of us below the poverty line. We don’t see a fee to leave, we need higher wages, transportation etc.*

*Giselle: You may remember my support fort the hearing and I’m here again because I feel student voices were neglected. Just as we are now, student voices will continue to be voistruous. Just because the timeline is unconventional, it inappropriate to lay a burden on the students who deal with poverty. It is insult to students who suffer each day. I want you to look past your own experiences but look beyond to see the reality of many students at Penn State.*

*Michael: Recently I could afford my own health insurance. Who has felt in this line of poverty? Students can’t pay to survive at this university. Do better.*

*Josh: I look forward to hearing what the arguments are for even shutting down the presentation for this subject. I know how long how hard some of my residents have worked and I know how much they wanted this to succeed. The timeline has been made shorter by the refusal of this proposal. It is hard to not be able to support yourself like the other around you support themselves. Its sad to see that the student has to deal with it. The number of people who should be at this university, aren’t able to be here due to poverty. As somebody who is dependent on a single mother, I THINK we need to at least recognize these issues and hear the presentation out.*

*Sydney: I’ve been a part of UPUA for three years. It is important to uplift each other. I heard this proposal is not within the SFB guidelines even though it was allowed to be sent in late by the chair. How can you argue that the student advisory did not try to find success for students? It’s not weather you feel comfortable or believe in more cost sharing. I hope we can look beyond our personal selves to invest time into other students. How can you argue that you wouldn’t help students by playing games with admin?*

*Zion: I am here today to show my support for the advisory’s proposal. I am here to express my concern with the SFB choice to not hear the hearing. I recall previously at last Friday’s meeting there were concerns about the true impact on students’ academic performance. How does it compare with how to keep a roof over your head or get food. We believe this proposal should have a hearing*

*Brian K: Student leadership is best through student collaboration. It is concerning that students have no allowed this subject to be talked about. Don’t allow you own distain to cloud your empathy for students in need. I ask, should you have a change in opinion, please choose your best to change this. Leave room for a less than $3 fee to be given back to David Sims. There is still opportunity for things to be made right. To the members of the community that need this and I’m sorry you have been let down*

*Ryan L: Part of me really wants to see that the people who voted no are bad people and you voted against something very important. I DON’T think you guys are bad people, you are doing a very hard job at an early hour. These decisions have a huge impact on the student body. I hope you realize you made the wrong decision and you need to make amends. I remember sitting in this room when people Claire Kelly supported the STI funding. I am here as a gay student as a member of lion pride and there are many people in there who struggle with money and can’t do a lot because of it.*

*Nora: I am disappointed in the representatives on this board who vote no. addressing student poverty can’t be forgotten. I understand the idea that the administration is accountable. You aren’t better than them as you are denying students the help they need. I hope you can reconsider you decision and vote yes on this.*

*David: Out of sight, out of mind is what I am hearing. There is a lack of care for students who experience poverty by sweeping it under the rug. At least 1/3 4-year college students have experiences poverty with both housing and food. 48% of students have had home insecurity. How many of you have experienced poverty? How many of you have talked to someone who is homeless? This is a systemic way to provide a service for impoverished students. I was astounded that facilities alone was around $158 and activities were $58. This clearly shows me your priorities. This argument right now is coming about from your actions and your votes. What exactly is your goal? All I see is privilege. Where is your heart when people are struggling while you party on homecoming? How exactly are you fulfilling your mission?*

*Sarah W: I am here to urge you to reconsider hearing the presentation on student poverty. The presentation has the power to help people around you and improve the lives of all students. The first step of this change is voting to hear this presentation*

*Celeste: I think that in terms of this unit being rejected, you need to understand that this is going to affect your peers in the future. I WANT to know why you voted no because I know you work hard to support this university, but this decision did the opposite. This is going to affect my community (transgender community) the most. You guys are supposed to be our voices. I don’t understand why you couldn’t hear this out. I think it was cowardly to not hear this presentation. The people who worked on this worked very hard.*

*Elijah: I would like to ask: How you actually ever seen any form of homelessness at State College? I want them to know it does exist. That is something that should be taken into consideration if you are voting no to this unit on student poverty*

*Owen: 80% of my high school students were below the poverty line. As someone who has seen the impacts up close, I urge you to at least hear them out.*

*Janiya: As an out of state, black, female, formally homeless student, it is embarrassing to have to beg our SFB to hear a problem that is so important to PSU students. We know this is an issue. If you’re in a position to do something about it, I urge you to just listen.*

*Latisha: Student deserve systemic solutions. The unit has several major flaws. We are trying to do better by our students. There was a lack of institutional commitment to this issue. We as students can’t solve student poverty on our own. We will give background and suggest considerations moving forward. First, we want to introduce information about the process. 3 steps: Proposal, vote and a presentation. Because the proposal is submitted in advanced, the SFB members can help us learn about the issue at hand and answer questions. We are supposed to have a proposal before a hearing.*

*Warren: The fee board actually received 2 proposals, one three days before and one, one day before. It asked for $80,000 and there were not university line items. This is especially important for salary positions that were not supported by the university. Its incapable with fee board procedures, we can’t provide a blank check without a line item. Damon Sims, later clarified that he did not approve the first proposal. The intent was to add leadership. This is still a conflict of interest*

*Megan: We are not disqualifying; it is just time we don’t have. It only said that the office would work with students’ affairs. With student stipends and other reasons, the university is asking that student’s tax themselves. This unit is going to receive funding next year even without the SFB*

*Claire: About the second proposal, instead of $80000, it asked for 200,000 moving it out of a pilot program. The proposal said this is only the base funding but there will be significant impacts in the future to fund students and poverty. Either we support the unit for a few years or yearly. I am not sure why there was 150% increase between proposal. That second proposal was written by Damon Sims not students. It is not a normal hearing. All of these concerns without time have an impact on us to support this hearing*

*Jacob: We are in support of student poverty, but we need more time to invest longtime. Proposals are due in December and our polices say we are not supposed to accept [proposals in the spring semester. You are familiar with the rules. We got a late proposal from UHS last year, but it was seemingly the same as their previous proposal. UHS was dealing with the pandemic and new director. We are not comparing apples to apples. This process for the student poverty, would have looked very different if it was presented weeks before.*

*Nora: Some insisted that timing wasn’t an issue. If we are truly committed, they would spend every second and hour to see it through. But th8is isn’t realistic. Of the 140 hours, we only have quorum for only 7 hours. Unfortunately, this is how this point in the semester works. Student poverty will move forward with university internal funding even without SFB funding. Students experiencing poverty deserve this. On the SFB side we need time to do students justice. We want long term sustained support for students with poverty*

*Schonn: I voted yes. I think it is distasteful that the SFB members who voted no are cowards. We can’t say that facts don’t matter. The proposals were due in December, not in March. It requires 3 months generally and you gave them a week to accomplish. If we fund this as a pilot, you would have to come back with a new proposal next year which doesn’t help student poverty. Why are we telling them to pay for the office? You can’t raise the prices n someone who needs the assistance. You can’t use them because you won’t be here. The university needs to pick up the tab on this. Next year, we expect everything to go up. How can impoverished students pay for these resources. This was a sham of a public comment.*

*Sean: I have to bring concern to this public comment hearing. It is terrible that people came in this board to slander the member without knowing them as people. There are more issues with this matter than aren’t publicly faced. Some of the most powerful group of people, it’s ridiculous and I truly feel that there needs to be a better ton eon this. They still have to find someone to hire, get office space, and it won’t impact students until they get those things. I FULLY BACK the proposal but this was handled in the wrong way. I know how involved you are in this project but its more complicated to sticking it to members of the board.*

*Najee: I am glad that the board is given time to students to hear about this. We are an hour in when this should’ve been allowed to be heard on Monday. When it comes to students not having a home, we will do anything give students that support. It is important to know the work as always done by students. Even though Sims did not communicate with us, does not mean students should have to suffer. He committed to hearing out the proposal in the original proposal. They will be coming back to the SFB for the original amount of money was requested. There was a lot of thought put into this and I want this to be seen by everybody. We will do anything as student advocates.*

*Erin: We have public comment because we are supposed to be dedicated to hearing out students. We had a proposal by December, and we are confirmed by this board that we could bring it in late with the thought there would be at least a vote on a hearing. The only line within our handbook that goes against this proposal which was the late timeline. On Friday, the main concern that was and was not line itemed out and the new proposal had line items. The discussion by this board, the rhetoric around this office that these 150 pages were not reviewed. We have an obligation to not only hear these students. Why are we sitting here if we aren’t going to decide to talk about student needs? Why do we let bureaucratic tape get in the way?*

*Sam: I think the bureaucratic red tape is bullshit. These select group of student leaders are here because students don’t have the liberty or privilege to show up at 8 am on a Friday to fight for things to the student body. When it comes down to discussion on how to produce, if you want to bring up these issues, have a hearing and do it there? That’s what hearings are for.*

*Elijah: I would like to agree with Sam. For students living in poverty, this is a time that students are working. It is not okay that there Is a meeting when students are working or in classes.*

*\_\_\_\_: I think it is inhumane to turn something like this down. You should make decisions as being a student leader. Student poverty is not something little and a lot of college face. Student poverty is on the map for student poverty. For you to turn down something for something that will help students, it’s a slap in the face to the people who worked on this last 8 months.*

*Erin: I don’t think anyone on this board doesn’t want o support student poverty. We also talk at a nauseum about how much we don’t want administrative people to stop us from putting forward student needs. When we have the ability to hear things out, I think that is our obligation. I don’t believe they are going against students in their moral capabilities.*

*Victoria: The fact that we are here talking about student poverty, and we have this proposal, and the answer being no is quite honestly outrageous and makes you wonder how we support kids on this campus. I think about Black Lives Matter. We came with this proposal twice, civically. We came here to bring our passion, our students. The 8 am meeting is an outrageous time for student stress. We are met with ‘oh you are going to be angry’ is missing everything we did to get here. We need to take a step back and see how to move forward as a group. Student poverty deserves the time no matter what the administration does.*

*Noah: I voted yes, I was close to voting no. I grew up in poverty, however, I want to acknowledge that this isn’t something the SFB should fund. I am thankful for the 8 months of preparation by the Advisory Board, but it isn’t respectful to expect us to accept the proposal when it was given in so late.*

*\_\_\_\_: We should have the format switched for the future. If we had an explanation in the beginning, it would have been a more effective meeting*

1. **Old Business:**

*No old business.*

1. **New Business**

*No new business.*

1. **Topics of Discussion:**
   1. **Deliberations**

***Equity fund proposal***

*Claire: we need to think about edits to the handbook. We have four hours left so I am not sure we will have time to edit our handbook during this session*

*Alexa: Why wouldn’t we add it to the handbook?*

*Claire: The main consideration is time. We can try to fit it in. We can leave suggestions for the next fee board.*

*Megan: I would be comfortable with leaving it for the next fee board*

*Latisha: I agree. How do we make sure the equity funds are used by not abused? One of our values is equity. In theory anyone who applies to the fee board, can apply to the equity fund. The point of the equity funds it so offices can get money if they need it. There should be wording that the equity fund that there is an extra level of addressing equity.*

*Alexa: There has been an organization who submitted a new fee request and the sustainability fund. If you wanted to use the equity, do they need to go through the sustainability fund?*

*Najee: We want to empower students through offices that want to engage in pilot programs. I think overall, instead of having to apply for more money, having the ability to spearhead that pilot program allows them to get data on the effectiveness of the program*

*Schonn: I thought the rubric was well organized. I think we should be weighting what we do in the handbook.*

*Claire: I think given that it is for short term projects, that guarantees that someone won’t come to the equity fund for standing allocations.*

*Schonn: With the equity fund, it says there is a cap of $400,000 in the allocation. ESF has to be under $250,000. Do we want to keep the cap or adjust to ESF’s way?*

*Claire: I don’t understand the difference*

*Najee: There is a chance that a funding project will be more utilized. That’s why we wanted to give it flexibility in its first year.*

*Tony: If there is going to be a cap, I support that*

*Schonn: I think there is merit to both. Could we note for the next fee board that we relook at the cap and to look more at projects?*

*Claire: By cap, do you mean reserve? Do you want to get rid of the cap?*

*Schonn: The projects have to be less than what the cap is. I see this being successful in the future.*

*Claire: In the proposals, does it say there is a cap?*

*Schonn: The guidelines for the next fee board could be in addition to the fee board*

*Najee: There is nothing to base it off of. We don’t have projects to reference*

*Warren: I am in support of it being a reserve and not a standing allocation.*

*Claire: Having a reserve model for unused funds*

*Erin: Annual amount of funding is $400,000. If not used, it will be put into a reserve*

*Najee: Do the reserves build up interest?*

*Claire: No. Fee board is always meant to be spent. On principle this is why we don’t earn interest on it*

*Megan: If there’s any money left over, that goes into the reserve?*

*Claire: Yes*

*Schonn: It could be helpful to lift language from ESF.*

*Claire: If we don’t get through it, we don’t but we can at least try.*

*Nora: If the processes are aligned, we can do a general overview to clarify the differences between them.*

*Claire: We would need to move ESF out of facilities. Our governing docs need 10 days for review. It would still be useful to have these edits for the next board.*

*Schonn: I support the funding at $400,00*

***Facilities Allocation***

*Claire: We obligated to pay the debt of previous fee boards. We stand that these units (in the PowerPoint) are getting flat funding this year. This is based on consensus. This is per semester. $100,000 makes a big difference for the student fee. OGEEP and CAPS have big increases. This would be a $10 this year*

*Latisha: These increases are partial?*

*Claire: Yes. These are based off all our conversations so far.*

*Warren: That is already an increase in 4%. In conversations with the finance office, they are indicating that 2% is what they were comfortable with. Pushing it to 4% overall. We might need a decrease in the facilities allocation.*

*Claire: The fee board needs full control. We can’t have limits put on us.*

*Schonn: Is the $9.91 is per year? Every part of cost is going up next year. I’m not comfortable with increasing the student fee to $20 a year. CAPS, there request for an assistant director through SFB dollars. I would love the university to cover that cost to give us more wiggle room elsewhere*

*Claire: $9.91 is per semester.*

*Schonn: I do think there is an overstep but it is important to our legitimacy. If every year, we propose something, and they say no, what is the point?*

*Warren: If they don’t accept, is there a reversal back to us?*

*Claire: They have the final say. I would suspect they would come back to us, but it would be the new board.*

*Schonn: I think they would keep it in house*

*Claire: We need to get on the CAPS proposal. It’s late to do negotiating*

*Schonn: I want them to say no first. If there is no room for negotiation, we need to figure out what is critical now. I am concerned that we are funding so many salary positions. While the increases are needed, it is not fair to us and the students who can’t afford the increase.*

*Claire: With the AVP for CAPS, they were being responsive to us.*

*Sean: I am in support in seeing if it can be moved off. Lowering the fee increase is always beneficial*

*Erin: We should try to cut down the cost but not at the expense of a service. This would be the last thing to compromise*

*Latisha: I agree with Erin. I still think overall, student fee dollars sometimes pay for the wrong things. I don’t think we should need to pay for a DENI position in CAPS.*

*Claire: I think this is ringing bells about the BJC. It’s very public and accessible to students, that have been a long-standing concern*

*Schonn: To clarify, we need to find places to reduce cost.*

*Sean: Maybe we can ask to be paid for in the future by other means.*

*Claire: It’s harder with salaries. If you have concerns about the facility scenarios, I need to know today.*

*Warren: There is a beauty of having 8 scenarios, you can put what you want the variable at and ignore the rest.*

1. **Subcommittee Reports**
   1. **Facilities**

*L. Franklin: We will be scheduling a meeting soon*

* 1. **Environmental Sustainability**

*N. Van Horn: No report*

* 1. **Standardization**

*S. Franklin: No update*

* 1. **Communication**

*N. Robertson: No update*

* 1. **Zero-Waste**

*Nora: No report*

* 1. **Equity Fund**

*Najee: No report*

1. **Chair Report**

*C. Kelling: We are going to talk about facilities. Our next meeting is Sunday 12-2. I’d like to keep going until someone needs to leave. We want everyone to have the ability to vote. Reminder to review the facilities and OGEEP proposals. Talk with your proxy early.*

1. **UPAC Chair Report**

*Alexa: Allocated over 2.1 million dollars*

1. **Communications Intern Report**

*Kate: No report.*

1. **Comments for Good of the Order**

*Sean: 8 am is not ideal. We didn’t want that either*

*Claire: We tried so hard to find another time*

*Schonn: Love you guys*

1. **Closing Roll Call**

*Meeting adjourned at 10:06 a.m*