Commonwealth Fee Board Meeting

Friday, November 4, 2022

4:00-5:30 p.m.

102 HUB-Robeson Center

ZOOM: <https://psu.zoom.us/j/95557803761?pwd=VG5kZitldjlwVU1KMnczYnpyaTVzdz09>

Agenda

## Welcome/Roll Call

Aashka Patel, Chair-present

Aiden Conese-present

Catherine Howard-present

Erick Vetovich-present

Gavin Miller-present

Kole Barclay-present

Lizbet Minchala-absent

Matthew Cascioli-present

Matthew Strupczewski-present

Raymond Ondrako-present

Andrea Dowhower-present

Jay Arcuri-present

Ken Miller-absent

Karen Kyle-present

Carlos Rodriguez-present

## Adoption of the Agenda

Motion to adopt the agenda by: Aiden Conese Seconded by: Erick Vetovich

Motion passes

## Adoption of the Minutes from the last meeting

Motion to adopt the minutes from the last meeting by: Catherine Howard Seconded by: Matt Cascioli

Motion passes.

## Items to be discussed and voted on (when noted)

* Introduction to University-wide basic needs support—Leanne Lenz

Leanne referenced the Food & Housing survey and talked about interactive questions that indicate signs of food insecurity and signs of housing insecurity. University is addressing these by adding new staff to the Student Care and Advocacy (SCA) office. The process for receiving help is filling out a basic needs form on behalf of yourself or someone else. The SCA office coaches and supports students with resources. Their assistance is not meant to be long-term but to help students get back on their feet. They are waiting for results from the survey but found that 7000 students across the campuses may be struggling. The SCA office contacted these students and have been receiving basic needs forms. A virtual session will be held on Nov. 15. Online resources are also available, which sometimes provide comfort and reduce barriers for students.

Fund raising is being done for a fund for students. Over $1 million have been distributed since the pandemic thus far. Swipe Out Hunger is coming up Nov 12-20. Contributions can be in meal points or Penn State Eats. Funds go to the emergency fund. Designation as a PA hunger-free campus will allow them to apply for grants. Students United Against Poverty (SUAP) is a new student organization affiliated with the office of Student Care and Advocacy. SUAP will be working on combatting student poverty at Penn State and beyond through awareness initiatives, peer support, and the creation of a basic needs hub to provide essential items to struggling students.  SUAP's reach will extend to Commonwealth campuses through virtual seminars on basic needs resources.

Catherine Howard asked if funds need to be re-paid. Funds come from donors and don’t need to be re-paid. Funding is a one-time only provision.

One-time funding was used to support the positions added to SCA. To maintain these services, SCA is in need of ongoing funding and will provide a proposal to the CFB in the spring. The need equates to one fulltime position.

Andrea added that the office will be going to the UP fee board as well. If only funded by the UPFB, services will not be fully available to campus students. We don’t want the campuses to be left out of the conversation.

* Campus SIF report—Karen Kyle

Folder in Teams “Student fee actual and balance” documents with a tab for every campus.

“Not relevant” category is general, non-specific. Karen explained that every campus is different and showed some examples.

The activity and facilities numbers appear separately.

Hazleton is the only campus with a negative balance, and this is because of a project. Campuses accumulated some balances during Covid, and some campuses are trying to spend down the balances in the student activity fee.

Related to the facility fee, their office encourages campuses—even though they may be saving for larger projects-- to reserve some money to use for smaller projects so students can see the impact of these funds.

* Discussion about fee levels, information collected from DSAs, SGA presidents

Andrea asked what information the board might want to have collected. Are there other questions besides what we typically ask on the DSA survey? An example may be to increase support for counseling specifically. Matt Cascioli asked what needs are anticipated such as hiring more counselors, updating facilities, different services that haven't been included before. Catherine Howard asked about housing for out-of-state students, student athletes.

Andrea asked -What do you want to know directly from your peers? This may be rhetorical, but we hope that board members are talking with their DSAs. We’ll need this by the February meeting. We’ll have a proposal for new fee for Food & Housing, CAPS, SLS, CFB. Think about what is needed at the campuses. Aashka asked about a survey for SGA presidents, to which Andrea replied that students need to put that out. (We can share our DSA version.) Andy Zimmerman, WB-SGA funds come from Student Affairs. AD-SA does not take funds back. Check with campus financial officers.

Aashka will give a survey to CFB members.

* Review CFB chair selection process and applications

Aashka talked through the document provided about the process.

* CFB funding, Aashka’s proposal

There was a discussion about the CFB funding proposal and specifically on how to classify “significant amount” of excess funds should they accumulate. Matt Cascioli felt that the amount should be $10k-$20k. Andrea explained that it should be enough to make it worth the administrative time to send funds back to campuses. If too much money builds up, perhaps we don’t need to fund CFB. Kole Barclay suggested that when it reaches a certain amount, the board could have a discussion about it. Matt Strupczewski expressed concern about requesting money in an open-ended way.

Carlos emphasized that re-distributing money to the campuses is an administrative nightmare. If setting a limit, keep that in mind.

Erick Vetovich wondered if the advisor could set the limit. Matt Strupczewski disagreed, saying that he would like CFB to keep its agency. Matt Cascioli felt that $8000 should be the limit, and Aiden Conese pointed out that $8k is four years’ worth of funding.

During discussion, Aashka was making changes to the proposal. Kole Barclay asked if we really need a set amount and felt that it was redundant.

Catherine Howard asked if it would differ for each campus. Aashka explained that it is for a CFB member who is not part of CCSG and therefore doesn’t have travel costs covered. Andrea added that it doesn’t happen often, but it may differ from year to year with more than one individual needing help with covering costs.

Aiden suggests keeping the cap.

Kole feels that it should be at the discretion of the board each year.

Gavin wants to raise the cap.

Motion to approve CFB funding proposal as re-written “If, over the years, $10,000 is accumulated, the CFB chair will only resume fee level request once the funds are at or below $6,000.” by: Aiden Conese. Seconded by Matt Strupczewski

Roll call vote taken with 8 for and 1 against. Motion passes.

## Additional Discussion / Public Comment

## Recommendations to the Vice President

## Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by: Aiden Conese Seconded by: Matt Strupczewski Motion passes.

Future meeting dates: Jan 27 virtual meeting, February 3, March 17, April 14 or 21—all meetings begin at 4:00