



Student Fee Board

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 1/27/23

Topic: Public Meeting

Present:

- **Voting members:** Lawrence Miller, Xiaoru (Tony) Shi, Jada Quinland, Yidi Wang, Brian Johnson, Conor Kelly, Ava Philips, Sydney Gibbard, Dallas Zebrowski, Cierra Chandler
- **Nonvoting members:** Alexa Clayton, Zander Golden, Jolinda Wilson, Barry Bram

Absent:

- **Voting members:** Noah Robertson, Najee Rodriguez

Agenda:

I. Call to Order and Opening Roll Call

Meeting called to order at 8:00 a.m.

II. Adoption of the Agenda

Motioned, seconded.

III. Adoption of the Minutes (January 20th, 2023)

Motioned, seconded.

IV. Public Comment

V. Old Business

VI. New Business

A. 8:15 - GPSA

Hemangi: GPSA Treasurer

Nataly: GPSA University Senator

Nataly: GPSA represents graduate student interests, organize events and programs for graduate / professional students, and facilitate communications between graduate and professional students. We have members on the Faculty Senate and Graduate Council, liaisons on advisory boards, such as health insurance.

A brief overview of how GPSA is comprised. We have 3 overarching branches: executive board (finance department, communication department, and external affairs department, president), assembly (at-large delegates and multiple committees), and judiciary.

Hemangi: Currently, requesting flat funding: \$59,542. To date, we have allocated \$26,925, and we are looking to spend the remaining funds in the next years. The major expenses we have had were the Winter Gala. Also planning the Black History Month event.

Lawrence: I know that you're asking for flat funding, but are you anticipating funds will not increase, considering your budget is over 3 years?

Hemangi: They will most likely increase, given that activities will increase.

Jada: We are not requesting increased funding since we are trying to feel out some newer committees, like environmental. We focus most of our allocations on co-sponsorships. Most are in the Spring. We feel it's safer to ask for flat funding.

Brian: Would you eventually expect an increase after the 3 years?

Jada: I think it would make sense to watch the spending of the 3 years. It would be easier to scale and not ask for increase sake.

Sydney: I was going to ask about outreach.

Jada: We've been hit with many resignations. I was more concerned that we would be hit hard. But that's where co-sponsorships work very well. A lot of our members are a part of other organizations as well. So co-sponsorships are a way GPSA can help alleviate the colleges students are in. We've had to retrain the people we've hired in place. Also, our Winter Gala was successful, which gained us a lot of leverage. For now, we're just making sure executive board is filled.

B. 8:45 - The Lion's Pantry

Nick: Treasurer

Julia: Communications Coordinator

Heide: Associate Director, Lion's Pantry Manager

Nick: Food insecurity stems from poverty and lack of understanding on how to manage finances properly. Experienced a lot by underclassmen. $\frac{1}{3}$ of PSU students experience some form of food insecurity. 24.1% indicated they identify "moderately well" to "extremely well" with the statement they "have trouble securing enough food each day." Nationally, 40% of students experienced food insecurity. This gives a general idea of the food insecurity problem.

In 2014, we received an endowment from the graduating class. We are located on Services Road to preserve anonymity of clients. We also have multiple Cub Pantries, this is the most rapidly growing area of the Pantry. We recently finished renovations over the summer - new fridges, A/C. The facility was completely redone.

We take confidentiality very seriously. You come in with your ID and take as needed. We only keep track of the weight. We have our main facility and multiple cub pantries. We have multiple fundraisers, but mainly it's collaborations with student organizations - mainly YMCA of Centre County and Student Farm provides us with fresh produce.

The Pantry is run by students. We have an executive board of 7 that help us with operations. We also hired our full-time staff person this past Fall - managing the whole process with operations and management. We have workdays that students can sign up for on Teams. Sometimes, we partner with the supply chain fraternity, who are helping us put together data for our supply chain process. Gives you roughly what the pantry looks like on the inside.

We are requesting funding directly proportional to the demand we are seeing. Asking for \$65,000 to pay for interns. We increased food and supplies purchases to \$125,000 - mainly due to inflation and replacing/storing food items.

In terms of demand, peaks at September and January.

13.5% of students who completed survey reported that housing or food concerns impacted their ability to focus on their academic responsibilities, and 27.5% reported that they lost weight due to food insecurity. It puts into perspective how big this problem is. Stress and classroom performance are affected by food insecurity.

Julia: In terms of our outreach and community presence, we provide a consistent online presence. Looking to also expand to LinkedIn to reach our alumni. Also new initiatives like a regular newsletter series and recipe resources.

Nick: To wrap up, why should SFB fund the Lion's Pantry? Consistent growth, capacity issues resolved, basic needs, and economic conditions. Requesting more funding than last year.

Brian: With regard to your increased funding, is most of that going to be funneled to employment or supply chain aspect?

Nick: $\frac{1}{3}$ goes toward employment. $\frac{2}{3}$ goes toward supply chain, including holidays. Don't get very many monetary donations.

Najee: I really appreciate the attention to detail to successfully run a student pantry as well as the food purchasing. Do you anticipate that demand will rise in the future?

Nick: In the Fall, Penn State reported a larger than anticipated freshman class. I would expect that trend to continue. As long as the number of students increase (also from satellite campuses), I do anticipate that demand will increase, especially as we increase our presence on social media and increase in food prices.

Lawrence: Software costs?

Nick: Currently using food pro software. But want to get funding for new software, making process of purchasing more fluid. Easier to work on Excel.

Lawrence: Looking to subsidize costs from central or any other businesses?

Nick: In the past, we worked with Housing and Food Services. Getting some of the staff people to cover some shifts. Moved a lot of our product to East dining to store in the past. Pallets of food from businesses. Constantly looking for opportunities like that. The Fee Board isn't the only source of funding, but it is the biggest and consistent source of monetary funds.

Tony: Cub's pantry. Mainly set up to increase accessibility. Who is in charge of monitoring supply and demand of cub's pantries?

Nick: We have a cub's pantry coordinator. I can give you his information. After we got to the number of cub's pantry locations, we felt the need to hire a coordinator. He works with our supply for the main facility and all the representatives from these coordinators to make sure they are well-supplied. Also have volunteers to help move product around.

Jada: Curious about elections.

Nick: In the Fall and Spring, we recruit members at the club fair. Anyone who joins as a member also typically volunteers. Members elect new board members.

Lawrence: Is any of your model based on model of success at other universities?

Nick: The model is based on what other food pantries have done, completely set up to work for University Park. UP is set up unlike most other places. Also have to take into consideration of things like preserving anonymity, freshmen tend to be congregated in one area.

Lawrence: Also serve faculty/staff. Have you talked with Faculty Senate to ask for subsidy?

Nick: We have not. But that would be very beneficial to do.

Jada: I know food insecurity doesn't discriminate. But have you looked into demographics?

Nick: We used statistics from housing and food needs survey. We are aware that food insecurity is linked to demographic issue. We previously had DEI chair. But also do not track much information to preserve anonymity.

Lawrence: I will be your point of contact for the board.

C. 9:15 - Penn State's Sustainability Institute

Peter: Assistant Director for Community Engagement

Doug: Associate Director for Student Engagement

Peter: The Sustainability Institute sits as a shared service, serving all of Penn State - research, teaching, community engagement, operations to help think about how to institutionalize sustainability. We use the UN's SDG's and take very broad view of sustainability, not just recycling and climate change. Sustainability also about protecting people, places, peace, hunger, poverty, healthcare, education.

We model students' journeys to sustainability mastery as having 3 stages: exposure (literacies), experience (competencies), and expertise (applied leadership).

In terms of our 2022-23 allocation, we requested a total of \$90,500, and a total projected spending of allocation of \$58,040. With our showcases, we have relied on goodwill of other people to share what they were doing for free. Expected after several years, students would be ready to come back to in-person events. Also seeking support to diversify and grow interns to provide high-impact educational experiences. And budget for room reservations, which are new.

2022-23 allocation challenges - why we came much lower with our budget. We didn't receive budget until November. In July, our director and deputy director retired, further delaying programming decision-making and hiring. As of September, we moved to the President's office, but cost line and budget lines are changing. Student appetite for in-person events remains much lower. Students still coming to events (about 30 more than last year), but coming online. 130 would show up online, and 10 person in person. This is why we moved a lot of programming online. Cut down on travel expenses for speakers.

2022-23 allocation successes and impacts - 6 films and 8 speakers, drawing more than 1,000 attendees. Hired one intern in summer 2022 and hiring another intern in spring 2023. 40% of our films directed by women. Next week, a film on conjunction of civil rights, women's rights,

LGBTQ+ rights. Also providing handbill and a colloquium on the environment, featuring AY Young.

2023-24 allocation request key changes. Looking for more opportunities to build skills and networks by providing regular monthly events. More opportunities to build speakers onto campus for longer. Tangible experiences in the middle part of their journeys. Gap in creating employment pipeline to further opportunities to develop as sustainability leaders. Every 2 years, would hire a Penn State graduate, and junior positions to help with programming.

For our funding request for next year, looking at \$75,600. Putting more effort into big events. Skill-building opportunities. Junior staff programming positions. Offers opportunities for more hands-on experiences, sustainability, growth.

Brian: Specifies creation of a student staff position. What would that entail, and how much of an increase?

Doug: Request we received last year was upwards of \$90,000, based on assumptions students interested in exposure opportunities. Too much money spent at this university. So looking at cost per interaction. 40 people in room - cost per interaction very high. It is too much for one day, one speaker. Our programming decreases down. We have 2-year contract with junior staff. Deliver programming interesting and engaging, which requires 2-3 days extra of programming. We are hearing from students that they need more skill building. Think the Institute and the Penn State institution can provide those experiences required in this competitive job market.

Brian: Do you anticipate any changes with salary?

Doug: No. Fringe normally goes up half a percent, but it is a 2-year commitment. Year-over-year, there will be a 1-2% increase.

Peter: Down to a staff of 10. One of the positions we used to have was a junior staff position. Lost that position, and Student Affairs no longer funding the 50%. We are funding 50%, we just need support from another partner.

Sydney: Student government has also reevaluated programming and bringing students into conversation. We have seen shift more towards advocacy. But I know there are limitations based on university. But how do you approach that?

Doug: Lots of energy towards sustainability. From a university office perspective. Students have energy to advocate, but how do we efficiently use that energy. Giving students those tools. Sometimes, advocacy is them figuring out how to advocate.

Sydney: So you would say you empower students to be advocates and less than university?

Doug: I think students underestimate ability to advocate, but voices get discouraged. What we need to be teaching on the advocacy front is resilience. The power is standing back up.

Peter: Skillsets we are trying to build is the idea of movement building. Students have more power than they sometimes realize to make change at this institution. But students only stay for 4 years. So thinking about how students can build movement, don't lose momentum after graduation, pass it on to next students. Not starting back from square one.

Doug: Also helping students navigate complex Penn State system. Our role for staff is to help broaden that system.

VII. Topics of Discussion

A. Possible Adjustment/Definition of Structure

Conor: Following up on budget structure, how are we defining? Discretionary funds for president, vice provost, and vice provost of the commonwealth campuses. I'm wondering if we can fall into that category as a student-oriented board.

Lawrence: We wouldn't change in process, but reclassify as under the University administration - what is our technical purpose?

Sydney: We're under Student Affairs?

Lawrence: Right. We're an advisory board for the Student Affairs budget?

Barry: You're an administrative entity and a recommending body.

Sydney: I don't think it would make sense to go under presidential discretionary.

Barry: Late March, this group will meet with Sarah Thorndike. That might be a good topic of discussion to formalize this group's presence on campus.

Lawrence: If there are any changes, this would go in our Constitution.

B. New fee coming up

We also have a large fee coming up in a new fee request. It is \$2M for a composting facility. There is a lot of vocal support, but this would be a very large jump in student fee. One thing we could do to help to subsidize is use one of our funds. We still have \$360K from Equity Fund.

Brian: Is this \$2M in addition to increase from University Health Services?

Lawrence: Yes.

VIII. Committee Chair Reports

Lawrence: ESF - 2 requests. Equity Fund - 4 requests. New Fee Request - 3 requests.

A. Equity Fund

Najee: We were debating on how to appropriately distribute the \$400,000, but there is also the \$360,000 in reserve, meaning we can fund the DEI career fair. And we would cancel out the CPA proposal.

Lawrence: My thinking is we had agreed on only using the \$400,000, just so we are not overloaded with fees and considering the timeframe. Anything that is carried over from this year, would it go into our facility reserve?

Jolinda: The equity fund carry-forward is sitting on Student Affairs side in a carry-forward account. It can go in the facility reserves if you wanted it to, but it can't without your direction.

Lawrence: The Sustainability Institute is asking for \$2M, and I was hoping a solution to offset some of that cost is to use the reserves from the equity fund. This is just something to keep in mind. Feb. 12, we are doing the UHS meeting. It will be over Zoom, and we will take care of both of their fees - general and STI testing. We're also going to be meeting with Janiyah Davis, the student trustee on a Sunday. It would be highly recommended for attendance.

Najee: When will we receive the materials for UHS?

Lawrence: Shortly, received materials 3-4 days ago.

IX. Subject Matter Experts

A. Childcare subsidy

Barry: Last, year the had a plan to subsidize child care. It's a 3 year plan that the institution would take on a little bit more each year.

Jada: I emailed her to see what she says. And she did send her calendar request.

X. Chair Report

Lawrence: Committee chairs, please upload all your materials in your Google Drive. EcoReps proposal / support statement will also be there.

Monday, we are doing the steering committee meeting. That will be transcribed. For Feb. 10, I will most likely not be here. Feb. 17, I will definitely not be here. For Feb. 10/17, is there anyone to chair?

Najee: I have chaired for UPUA meetings.

Lawrence: Week of 17th is the hearing for new fee requests. We are still waiting on 6 fee requests to go on the calendar.

Najee: Is there a deadline to submit calendar times?

Lawrence: ASAP. I don't need materials until the week before. I should be able to upload anything I'm given on the week of the 10th.

XI. Comments for Good of the Order

Najee: As we have to decide about increases in student fee, we have to be cognizant. Popular ideas such as student health fee vs. speaker events. How to balance expansive cost vs. what students need to have.

XII. Closing Roll Call

Meeting adjourned at 9:58 a.m.

