Commonwealth Fee Board Meeting

Friday, February 3, 2023

4:00-5:30 p.m.

102 HUB-Robeson Center

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

Minutes

## Welcome/Roll Call

Aashka Patel, Chair-present

Aiden Conese-present

Catherine Howard-absent

Erick Vetovich-present

Gavin Miller-present

Kara Wright-present

Kole Barclay-present

Lizbet Minchala-present

Matthew Cascioli-present

Matthew Strupczewski-present

Raymond Ondrako-present

Andrea Dowhower-present

Jay Arcuri-present

Ken Miller-present

Karen Kyle-absent

Carlos Rodriguez-present

Dan Murphy-present

Jess Heckler-present

Guests-Jaxon Zeli, Sara Thorndike

## Adoption of the Agenda

Motion to adopt agenda by: Aiden Conese Seconded by: Raymond Ondrako Motion passes

## Adoption of the Minutes from the last meeting

Motion to adopt last meeting’s minutes by: Kole Barclay Seconded by: Aiden Conese Motion passes

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

* Basic needs support fee request—Leanne Lenz

See PPT-The request is for $85,000 to fund 1 full-time case manager position. This position would provide professional development opportunities for Commonwealth campus liaisons, virtual basic needs resources sessions for all students, administrative support to implement basic needs programs to campus students and more. Case management is one of the recommendations of The Food and Housing Insecurity Task Force.

Matt Cascioli inquired about the breakdown between CFB vs SFB. Leanne explained that that the request is for 1 case manager position and correlates with how many students will be served.

Ken Miller asked if there had been a request for funding from central administration. Andrea’s sense was that the plan was that it would come from fee money. She reminded the board that this is similar to Student Legal Services, where funding came fully from SFB and CWC students were added later. So, if this is not approved by CFB, it may go forward only for UP students.

* Mid-year audit review and CCSG proposed budget-Jaxon Zeli

See documents in Teams space. Carryforward reduced to $1000. Jaxon and Kara Wright gave an explanation of a few changes to the budget primarily because of inflation.

* Review of CAPS and Student Legal Services funding requests

Requested per student amounts are: CAPS $8.67 and SLS $2.83

* Propose fee levels

The amounts are an estimate based on the number of fee-paying students this year for next year.

Members should begin to think about these options and get feedback from others. (See 2023-24 fee breakdown options document in Teams space.)

Aiden Conese said that a raise in facilities would benefit Altoona and suggested an Activities raise by $4 and a Facilities raise by $9.

Matt Strupczewski said that an activities raise would benefit Behrend and that Plan C is preferred.

Aashka Patel reminded the board members that we make these decisions for all campuses, not just individual campuses.

Ken Miller pointed out that many campuses have been dealing with declines in enrollment as well as inflation. Unanimity would be needed for an increase among campuses. Jay Arcuri talked about Mont Alto’s need for a counselor.

Matt Strupczewski said that there is also a CAPS need at Behrend. His campus’s events show both decreased enrollment and increased participation. A fee increase would help.

Aashka Patel asked if enrollment has rebounded since the pandemic. Carlos Rodriguez replied that it has rebounded, but there is a new budget model and budgets have been reduced. Additionally, they are anticipating a decline in student credit hours. Andrea explained that there is a prorated fee for part-time students.

Andrea asked board if you had to vote today, how would you vote? Aashka asked each member: Matt Strupczewski -plan C, Gavin Miller-plan C, Aiden Conese-plan D, Matt Cascioli-activities high, facilities low, Raymond Ondrako-plan C, Kole Barclay- plan C, with funds for student wages a concern, Liz Minchala-plan C but wants an increase in CAPS. Andrea explained that the CAPS fee amount is based on CAPS’ request, other counseling needs are paid for from the activities fee. Also, money can be shifted from facilities to activities for this purpose.

Kole Barclay suggested plan F, which would be a $9 increase in both activities and facilities. Matt Strupczewski agrees.

Andrea requests that members talk to others at Council for feedback.

* CFB chair selection process: Applications due by Feb. 24

Nomination weekend—members are encouraged to think about the chair position

Andrea encouraged members to review the process. Erick Vetovich and Dan Murphy will spearhead.

* April meeting

We will keep this meeting on April 21st, but it will be virtual.

* Fiscal year 2024-25—Sara Thorndike 5:00pm

Sara explained that the new budget model presents budgets to the Board of Trustees for 2 years, which will help for planning ahead. CFB needs to plan for fiscal year 2025 and let Sara know what the rate change will be for FY 25.

The reasoning behind this is in her following points:

* In July 2023, the Board of Trustees will be asked to approve Penn State’s budgets for fiscal year 2023-2024 and 2024-2025.
* When the budgets are presented, approval for tuition, fees, and room and board rates for both years will also be requested.
* The University currently waits for the Commonwealth to approve the State’s budget before setting tuition rates each year, so we don’t put our state appropriations in jeopardy. This means our students don’t know how much they will be charged for tuition and fees until late July or early August only a few weeks before they arrive for the fall semester.
* We want students and families to know the rates we will charge when they apply to attend Penn State. This will also help with awarding financial aid packages.
* Penn State’s Office of Government Relations believes we can set rates a year ahead of the state approving their budget and Penn State’s appropriations without putting the appropriations we receive from the state at risk.
* Next year, in July 2024, the Board of Trustees will be asked to approve one year’s budget for fiscal year 2025-2026.

CFB decides on FY 2024 at the March meeting, and then at the April meeting will decide on FY 2025. Boards will need to decide whether we ask those who come with fee requests whether they make request for two years.

Next meeting will be a vote on CAPS, SLS, CCSG, Basic Needs requests. Andrea suggests that we do Basic Needs separately and group the other three for the vote. Then we must decide on fee level.

Kole Barclay expressed a concern from his DSA that carryover money has been being absorbed. Carlos Rodriguez rejects that and says that a call has gone out to reduce expenses, but not a dollar is being held back. DSAs can speak with their FOs or reach out to Carlos directly. Campuses hold carryforward money but not student-initiated fee money.

Andrea has heard that monies are being held and are not showing in their budgets. Carlos explained that the dollars are there, but they may not show because their use is not yet planned. What is shown are only the dollars that are being spent. The money is there.

This is new this year: we’re planning a budget and showing only what is expensed.

Ken tried to help explain this by saying that we should think of the money that is not shown as sitting in a reserve fund.

Carlos said that there may be a disconnect between the DSA and their FO. They may look into the communication disconnect.

Andrea shared that she’s heard that there is a long process for campuses to get their requested money.

* Proposal for change to CFB Operating Procedures related to student org insurance (if time allows)

## Additional Discussion / Public Comment

## Recommendations to the Vice President

## Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by: Aiden Conese Seconded by: Kole Barclay Motion passes

Future meeting dates: March 17, April 21 (virtual)—all meetings begin at 4:00