



TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2009
TWENTY-SEVENTH MEETING OF 2008-2009 SENATE

CALL TO ORDER
START TIME: 7:25

ROLL CALL
FINANCE: Kevin Issadore (excused) Alex Mallea (excused)
STUDENT ACTIVITIES: Drew Sander (excused)
COLA: all present
CODEEE: Bob Just (excused) Amanda Wong (excused)
STUDENT ACTION: all present
PR: Seth Corthell (excused) Ana Dru Ellis (excused)
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS: all present

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: approved

PUBLIC FORUM

Jared Alvord: Representative to the America East Conference for Universities
Student Athlete Advisory Council.

I am a junior at UVM and a student athlete on the Student Athlete Advisory Council for 2 1/2 years now. It has great officers and got out there to do stuff but we are now interested in getting involved with the SGA senate and get some of our people to come in and sit at your meeting and have some of your people come and sit in at our meetings. The council has been around for over 10 years now. We really want to get involved with you. Having members sitting in and listening in would be great. I am going to write up a proposal and present it next year.

I also want to speak about VT Yankee. I am a student here and I am from western Mass. People are concerned with getting rid of VT Yankee. When you look at it, it's not going to hurt jobs. Most people they hire are from out of state. Not a lot of the money they make even goes through Vermont. I am really interested in renewable energy. Renewable energy will create so many more jobs. I have a lot of support for the decommissioning of VT Yankee. It's not going to hurt us as much as you think.

Whitmore: What do you see as some goals or results you would like to see in this room?

I would like to get us involved with each other a bit more. We are what you are but for the student athletes. So we kind of do the same thing you do but on a much smaller scale. A lot of student athletes don't get out into the community as I would like to see. They keep to themselves backed off doing their own thing and I want to see us getting out there on campus.

Glynne: I have friends on the baseball and softball teams, what support or lack there of did you have for those teams?

We had members on the counsel form both of the teams. It's a horrible situation. We have had full support for them. We have been in contact with the athletic department. It's hard to speak to them about that because once it's done it's done. I am in contact with an athletic director and we have a group going in and speaking to him about that. The biggest problem we have is the way they told the teams it was very unprofessional.

Jill Tarule: Accreditation Committee

I am associate provost for academic affairs and co chair of accreditation committee. The visit will be happening April 19th-22nd. The New England Association for schools and college accreditation committee will be here. They will visit us for those days and examine how the University meets the 11 standards. During the visit there will be an opportunity for all kinds of groups to meet with various members of the committee. They want to know what the student experience is. I am telling you this as to let you know this is happening and it's a very important time.

Jones: Have you herd of any rumors of possible departments or colleges that should be concerned about accreditation because of the budget cuts.

No it's true that all accreting agents take a look at do you have the resources to deliver the program. The next visits are nursing in a couple years and teacher and social work program next year.

VT Yankee

Serena

I am running to be a senator and I am a recent transfer student. I was here at the last meeting and there was a lot of talk about how VT Yankee needs to be disassembled and the power plant needs to be stopped. I think the VT Yankee issue is not black and white, its more complicated then it appears. My father is on a committee that is trying to disable nuclear weapons in other countries. A lot of the radioactive material and nuclear waist in atomic bombs or nuclear weapons are a source to nuclear power plants. A lot of enriched uranium is form Indian reservations. There was talk about France and how there is no real issue when 80% of their energy comes form nuclear power. On the surface it seams fine but if you look into it there is talk that Arava (main power company in France) is owned only by the government and there are a lot of issues. They outsource their waist to other countries. That's a problem because it's better kept in the area it's produced. There are different radioactive waist sights

and radioactive radiuses were there are increased levels of cancer. But Entergy owns VT Yankee and when they took over they increased their power out put by 20%, which increased various rates of cancer in the surrounding area. There are currently a lot of companies that provide other energy and alternate recourses which would be increase if VT Yankee is no larger functioning.

Van Backer: Could you cite some of your sources?

There is a web sight revermont.org and an article in Business Week talking about France and negative effects of nuclear power. I didn't cite in my research but I can get back to you.

Lopez: I don't feel it's dangerous. There are transportation companies and they are made to be stable so even if there was a crash it's not dangerous to transport waist.

I took a class as Syracuse and it didn't directly have to do with the transportation but the capsules that the radioactive waist is put in, eventually they erode.

Ian

I ask all of you to look at it wholelisticly. This is talking about environmental justice. Where are we getting the materials for our energy from, the west? And mostly on Native American soils. We are extracting those places. We don't mine it in Vermont we being it in. The capsules are made to transport but not made to last. So if we build a product lets make sure its going to last. Are we fully confident that the materials we are using are going to last. Once we have used it what do we do with it? We are putting it along the Connecticut River in Vermont. So now we put Vermont citizens at risk. Putting a policy down saying we want to use and mine more is almost foolish if we are not confident we are going to keep everyone safe. Its and economic issue as well. This nuclear power plant that is owned by Entergy has constantly done updates on how much decommissioning will cost. It's gone up to almost a billion. Entergy has to pay the cost and they are trying to get out of that. They are trying to get it paid through tax dollars. If we relicense this and it goes on till 2035 will the decommissioning cost continue to go up and will they try to get out of the deal and put the Burdon on the tax payer. We are dealing with a finite resource. Uranium peaked already. Eventually this resource is going to run out. Instead of relying on a finite source lets think about renewable energy. It needs to be further looked at. When you are voting on this you are speaking for 10 thousand students and we haven't herd anyone to come in to speak for the refinancing of it but we have herd the other side. You need to think about whom you represent and who came out to speak about this issue.

Whitmore: What would your response be to the thought that the tribes actually appreciate the mining because it brings in a lot of revenue?

I would ask those same people how about installing solar panels on their land. So instead of getting the negative effects of people extracting the resources. How about a constant source of energy that doesn't create a negative effect.

McDonald: Point of information in one reservation there was mining going on that made sever cases of cancer and multiple family members died of cancer linked to uranium and other mining and storage of

its products. Also it's a social justice issue. The economic situation is so bad they are forced to compromise their own health to make a living.

Cafarelli: How do you justify, or what would you say to the people who live in Vermont who will have to pay an increase in energy prices because of the loss of VT Yankee?

It's not talking about pathways to alternative energy. Yes your cost will go up but is there a way to advocate for other methods too throughout it to allow for that increased cost to only be for a certain amount of time. How can you ask that knowing that in 2035 there won't be VT Yankee? We need a plan for when they are gone so we can secure our better future.

Mensah: If when 2012 comes and VT Yankee is closed down how would you account for the power that needs to be executed out in the state because renewable resources are not giving as much energy to the state as VT Yankee? The main issue is that if it's shut down where is the energy the state needs going to come from if the wind isn't up to par.

I am not an expert. I ask you to have a field trip across the lake where there is a wind farm. The technology is here but are we willing to look into these issues and install them in and allow that to happen in Vermont.

Valenta: The VPERG guy mentioned that the wood chipping plant put out more carbon pollution than nuclear does. So why is that a better solution? We have several hundred years to come up with the technologies to get rid of the waste.

I understand where you are coming from, it's carbon neutral. But as stated last week, a student came up and related it to how the process of making the nuclear power is very carbon intensive. At least our pollution is local and controlled by the state. It would allow the Vermonters to know where our energy is coming from and what the actual cost was.

Crowley: Point of information generally it's considered carbon neutral to burn the carbon in woodchips because they have to pass certain sustainability laws so for every burnt tree there is a new one planted.

Benay: This shows me how supportive and involved our students are getting. I don't know if you read the current resolution. The debate we are having is wonderful but the resolution has nothing to do with pro or anti nuclear power. It has to do with coming up with a compromise. Saying we get it there is a problem. We are asking the state to look into it further to continue the one year. It is clear a lot of students are concerned. But we are not against you.

Lopez: I know it is located in Vermont but other states rely more on it for energy. Where would western Massachusetts get their energy from?

The utility companies that are in this area are aware. The states that rely on VT Yankee have come to take precautionary steps. Our lights are not going to turn off.

Lopez: What is the danger you actually see. Is it from the power plant or is it the waste?

I don't trust something that can live 2 or 3 thousand years after I am dead. What I am afraid of is I don't know what this energy consists of. I haven't seen where it comes from. What I have been told is this stuff is the worst of the worst so I don't know why we are even handling it. To take that material and put it along a river in our own state, I don't see the reason with so many alternatives.

Rep. Rom and Westin

Kesha

Today is an incredibly historic day. You let the legislature know what young people want. It passed 100 to 49. If you want to know about that feel free to ask questions. I applaud you all and the community at UVM for getting involved and for sending letters to some senators. It's a tough decision, do you vote to uphold the will of the legislature or to uphold the governor's veto. It's the 7th time out of 134 vetoes that we have actually overridden a veto.

This is Rachel Westin from the Natural Resources and Energy Committee.

Rachel Westin

I was the youngest member until she ran. Graduated from UVM with a masters in public administration. I have served on the natural resources and energy committee for 3 years now. As Kasha mentioned you all passed a resolution in support of gay marriage. While it might feel like you are only in this room but that resolution was widely circulated and well known throughout the legislature. UVM is a great place to come to to see what the youth think in Vermont.

I want to go through the resolution line by line which is what we do when we go through a bill. I had the committee chair read through this today and he made some suggestions. I wanted to give you additional information for each one of the lines.

First line good.

Second line there is not legislation that prohibits nuclear energy plants from operating beyond their licenses but a legislature is allowed to vote on its continued operation past their licenses if they see fit.

Third line. This is a big question. This is something we are looking at in the legislature next year as we take a more serious look at should VT Yankee be deemed reliable for continued operation

Fourth. This statement is not necessarily true. We have not received information about the new rates yet, we don't know.

Next. As written the sentence doesn't make sense because the costs of utility are a business but the cost of your electricity is what you are trying to get at. And it's said that VT Yankee is the cheapest but the spot market right now is actually cheaper than Vermont Yankee. Some utilities are looking forward into building more wind power.

Next. The chair doesn't have any knowledge of this. And the tax revenue, Yankee does add tax revenue. But if you are going to other forms of energy it doesn't matter who you are, you are going to have workers and taxes. It's going to come out relatively the same. Without knowing the cost of energy in the future we don't know the beneficial cost of additional economic stimulus that would come from the price of power.

Next. The current renewable resources we have that's true. When VT Yankee is relicensed or shutdown we are going to keep trying to find the power to replace it. We know that Hydro Québec is putting out hundreds of megawatts of wind energy right now, which is energy they want to send to us. We have also other wind field and places production biomass plants. So three big deals would take care of all the power we would need.

Next. True.

Next. Not necessarily because we do have projects coming on line currently. If we did have to buy from out of state Hydro Québec would not be the most likely candidate. Vermont is not a state that has to pay to the carbon credit system.

Next. This is what is currently written. They don't have any where to put it and they told us be ready to store it for 60-100 years as a minimum.

Next. Good

Next. To really know if there are economic benefits you need to know the price of power.

Next. I think this is your policy statement and when it comes to it that's what the policy makers are going to be looking at. But you have another statement about renewable energy resources being up by 2032.

Next. I agree we need to make sure those inspections and replacements keep going on.

Next. They told us they will not be picking up the waist so I encourage you to make the statement that they should pick it up.

Next. You might know the legislature passed a decommissioning bill to ensure the decommissioning fund is fully funded.

All that being said what we would do with this if I was in the legislature is we go thought a system of amending it and having people come in to talk about changes to make sure you are saying exactly what you want to say.

Wilkinson-Ray: That was really good to hear. If you had to vote on this right now how do you think you would vote?

We don't have the information so we can't vote on it now.

Glynne: You bought up that we probably get 1/3 of our power from Hydro Québec. Why would you want to outsource power to another country or state? Why would you do that, its jobs and revenue?

There are a lot of in state options. You can buy power from the open market, which is a mix of mostly natural gas from Mass. and Conn. If they were to shut down in 2012 Hydro Québec is but one of the other options that is being putting in place.

Foster: We did our letter writing campaign at the end of last week and I wanted to tell you guys we didn't send them to everyone who said yes just out of a fiscal matter. So I wanted you to extend out thanks to all who voted yes. Now that it has been passed what have you guys been hearing?

As far as in the physical space, we saw a lot more yellow buttons in the building. This time there had been a 9 year conversation and it was decide that it made scene. Civil unions didn't change the state. Each district was very different. We are fortunate to be part of districts that support gay marriage upwards of 85%. There were people who voted who feel like they voted there own opinions and are worried about their reelection form both sides. In appropriation they often have to deal with taking away money form one program and giving it to another. If we extend marriage befits to same sex couples what are we giving them and what are we taking away form couples that continue to lead their lives. Some say god won't look on Vermont favorable anymore. We went against their views. And I respect that. But there are many more people who just feel so empowered and so much more like Vermonters and so much more human. The deference between a marriage and a civil union is one is letting you know that you are part of the Vermont and human family instead of something separate.

Candon: I appreciate you dissecting my bill. I read that sates that had carbon producing power are taxed by the federal government.

I don't know anything about that. Currently that is not in place in the US. It is not a UN or federal thing it's voluntary.

Maciewicz: What type of organization is looking at the nuclear safety? Is the NSA bias?

They are a contractor hired to look at it. One of many concreters hired. There are lots of reports on reliability and continued operation.

Valenta: Are there any pro nuclear legislates who would be willing to come down? It's nice to hear both sides. It would be nice to here from that political standpoint. Who do you know who we could contact?

In the context of VT Yankee and relicencing it. It's not about pro or against nuclear. There is no black and white when it comes to nuclear. Some questions I raised are the same crucial points coming from both sides of the issue. It's hard to pin down one person who is very pro or very anti on any case.

Ellis: How fast could renewable energy potentially start?

Voted out tomorrow it has a start date of when the bill is enacted. We could see 15 mega watts in a month or year or 2 years. That project will be on going.

It's very timely to start working on that sort of stuff right now. I think it lamentable that we have a lot of other energy companies in the state. We have the experts and passion and yet we see people giving other states revenue.

EMERGENCY BUSINESS

Recognition of the Student Dietetics Association

Sanders: read the bill.

People from the club Mary Kate the president and Mattie the vice present

We started the club after attending a conference on food and nutrition. We learned about the student counsel within the American dietetic association. We then learned about student dietetic associations within colleges and university and wanted to bring one to UVM. We learned that most programs around the country already have one in place.

We worked with the director for the dietetics program. And people from across the country in different associations. We wanted to start up the program so we worked with our representative to do different officer positions. We met as the officers and then did an interest meeting. Since then we have had 2 official meetings and did an activity with the center for health and wellbeing. We recently had a professor from another university come and speak.

VOTE passed

Issadore: We want to give crew \$6850 to buy a new trailer for their boats because theirs is falling apart and runs a lot of risks in using it. It is a capital proposal so that means that a club can apply for one every 5 years so that being said they wouldn't be able to ask for another capital proposal for the next five years. They are getting huge discount on this and they got a lot of stuff donated. They are not asking for the cost of the steel to build it. They got the labor donated. They have been talking with the finance office for a long time and we are making this decision knowing that there is the money in our capital funds account and it hasn't been used that much this year and so it seems appropriate to do.

Walsh: It is important that you see their trailer. It's in really bad condition and they need this and they do a great job fundraising

Ash: What percentage is that of the total cost and how have they fundraised?

The total amount they asked for was \$7500 but that may not be the total cost. And its normally 10-14 thousand and they got all the labor donated.

Porter: point of information they are one of the best fundraising clubs.

VOTE passed

Corthell: recognition of UVM TV for club of the fort night. Read the bill.

VOTE passed

NEW BUSINESS

Constitutional Amendments

OLD BUSINESS

SGA Budget

Porter: I gave a presentation 2 weeks ago and got the budget out to you and now its time to approve the SGA budget. I only got one question so I will take questions now.

VOTE passed

Jones: bottled water consumption deterrents act.

McDonald: Read bill.

Whitmore: I like the goal and the ends that are trying to be reached here. My question is, how is it socially detrimental? And I like your resolution but is there some sort of compromise rather than not selling it at all, maybe it could be available but just not in mass quantities.

I outlined there are numerous accounts of communities in the US where corporations come in and by up rights to pump water that hadn't been owned and pump it for free. And drawing down the water table so much that people who had wells could not reach the water table anymore. In India Coca-Cola has been buying up rights to water and selling it out of the country. Residents are drinking contaminated water because of the deprivation. This is not only on bottle water. Only a discouragement of bottle water consumption at UVM.

Van Backer: great idea, but one problem I have with it is denouncing something as SGA. Denouncing any part of the university just doesn't seem right. I don't know if we even have that power. Friendly amendment to put strongly discourages not denounces.

Accepted

Issadore: My basic problem is with the final be it further resolved. Well it's not bad but it sounds like we are discouraging something from the free market economy. It really looks like a socialist statement and it's not our position to come in and from any ideology. To denounce someone from perusing there interest doesn't sit very well with me.

This is going off an idea that many other cities have already passed saying the tax money cannot be spent on bottled water.

VOTE passed

Resolution Regarding the Relicensing of Vermont Yankee

Candon

I made some minor edits. I think I am right in a couple of areas. Read the bill and went over changes. I stand behind this resolution. We have no students in here right now so maybe that signifies that students are happier (nay). These are hypothetical solutions that have been discussed for a while but nothing has happen thus far. Where is the money to subsidize energy efficiency programs coming from? Renewable energy and energy efficacy are great ideas but they take time. I think the state is going to vote to keep Vermont Yankee open. I am not an expert but there are experts that say the plant is maintained. If they closed Vermont Yankee it would be about safety not price. A reasonable piece of legislation like this one can actually be herd in the legislation. We need long term plans with short term intermediates to get there.

McDonald: I feel it's written very vaguely and just not skillfully written and not in an informative way. It just seems there could have been a lot more research done. A lot of the clauses either were incorrect or lacked information. I want to know where the act mentioned comes from. The state legislature won't make a decision until further information is known and they do not have enough information to make a decision at this time so what makes you think we have enough information to make that decision? I see energy efficiency as the cheapest source of energy in Vermont. The federal government is required to take the waist but it hasn't and won't as of now. I just feel like it is poorly written. And it could be as soon as 2 months that a new wind power plant could be constructed.

Point of information with an act it pertains to a government act. And within the year would be quick, not in two months.

Candon: The NSA, they provide quality insurance and reliability and are hired by the state. Go on that information and the information about the act is directly from both reports. The resolution is written very vague. It's a huge topic it doesn't take a strong firm statement for reasons because this topic is not back and white, it is very complex. The federal government is required to take the waist. The government is getting sewed for that. They just built a dry storage place on the facility.

Lopez: We know nuclear energy is cheap and efficient and to knowledge it is carbon neutral. Nothing bad has happened to France. There is not enough info about nuclear energy in general. We are tying to send a message to the legislature of Vermont. More detail might have to go into it. When coming to vote for this see where it's coming from look at the economical cost of reliable renewable energy. In the current situation we should support VT Yankee until its license expires.

Wong: Point of information so many countries in Europe use nuclear energy because they have used up all of their other recourses.

Wilkinson-ray: The bill wants renewable energy by 2032. No we wanted it yesterday. It's more than just economic. Are we concerned about Vermont or Entergy? Why were students not able to see the bill ahead of time? That brings up a problem with transparency. The bill is contradictory. I appreciate your opinion on this matter but going forward with this bill is stubborn. That bill was just torn apart. Westin

said the gay marriage bill was helpful but this bill will not help anyone do anything, it doesn't say anything.

Ford-Hutchinson: I suggest an amendment in the second whereas it doesn't make sense so change some words. Change unless to granted that (accepted) and then get rid of the year 2032 I think Vermont can do better (accepted)

Roberson: Friendly amendment in the second is it resolved I think short term should be changed to long term (accepted) and also I am confused because your policy statement sounds pretty good, but we also say we agree with the general assembly if they vote to have Vermont Yankee continue operations. That seems contradictory to me and it doesn't take a stance. We really need to take a stance on one side or the other. Either we support them removing and decommissioning or we want them to have it; we can't have it both ways.

Candon: I don't think that it's a policy statement. It doesn't hold any more weight than any other statement. I wanted to say that we understand or I understand that if VT Yankee is relicensed it is because of economic reasons but we don't agree with nuclear energy and we want renewable. I would say that it's more of an explanation and not contradictory statement.

Robertson: Either we don't agree with it or we want them to have it. I don't see how we can have the two opposing sides in the resolution.

Candon: It's a short term intimidate till we implement a long-term solution. We give our short-term solution and then state our long-term solution. We agree with it short term but not long term.

Glynne: They agency was a private firm but the government hires private firms to do its bidding. I think the people against it are in some way a bit out of touch with reality. The economy issue in Vermont is bad. The unemployment rate is currently 7.5% in Vermont. VT Yankee is a big economic driver. If you cut that in half that is still 304 jobs that can put food on the table. Obama does support alternative sources of nuclear energy. We do believe that short term this is a positive solution but long term its bad. We have 30 years of research on the effects on the community and they government is still backing it up. I beg you to support our legislation.

Jones: I believe Obama is in support of safe nuclear energy. I want to talk about student representatives outside of Slade and Rubenstein School. We had someone from the student athletes counsel. The economic benefits argument and I still have yet to hear what they are. How many jobs would be created if we don't relicense VT Yankee and started focusing on green jobs? And these taxes and stuff these are an assumption. The policy statement, I think that's just a legislative term. It's just our action statements and then our "be it resolved". And if we have weak active statements then what is the purpose. Where is this resolution going to go then? It's going to be used as a tool for Entergy? The resolution is being evolved and amended we are starting to get into a completely different issue. I don't see how this is falling in line with relicensing nuclear energy.

Candon: The NSA report found that it could be reliable and run. I don't think Rachel is the entire voice of the Natural Resources committee.

Foster: I just can't support this resolution. You just said we shouldn't second guess these people. I feel this resolution is admitting defeat we can't achieve alternative power from sustainable means by 2012. Yes we can. There have been a couple of other points. Just because Obama supports nuclear power doesn't mean that we have to agree with it. My gay marriage bill set out a clear and distinctive vision for the future of Vermont. And this resolution doesn't say we support it or we don't. I am voting against this because with the relicensing of this plant the rates will go up and I am not certain what the gap will be compared to the cost of putting in sustainable power. The repeated mechanical failures of Vermont Yankee I have to say that I live by a power plant and I never once seen a story regarding a mechanical failure and we here stories about VT Yankee all the time. It will be 60 years old in 2032 so think about stuff from back then would it be safe. The wishes of the students we have heard from respectively. We haven't heard that from a bunch of students on a lot of issues.

Candon: Vermont is the only state that has a nuclear engineer on staff and they have to report on anything that happens in Vermont Yankee.

VOTE doesn't pass 12 in favor 15 opposed 5 abstentions

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

SPEAKER FRANK:

Please turn in your voting records as for committee reports please email them out.

PRESIDENT TAYLOR:

I will pass around a letter to go to one specific person who voted against marriage equality who happens to be a new trustee at UVM. We put together a letter to everyone who voted against it. Pass around graphic design policy. Vice president of research has gone into the public interview process I will forward the email. Nursing search committee had its first meeting yesterday. Treasurer applications are due tomorrow.

VICE-PRESIDENT KENNEDY:

The website is live. Thank you for those who came to the banquet.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE- SEN. ISSADORE:

STUDENT ACTIVITIES- SEN. SANDER:

COLA- SEN. SHACKETT:

CODEEEE- SEN. JONES:

STUDENT ACTION- SEN. WALSH:

Check out our you tube sight please watch them and tell your fiends to

PR- SEN. CORTHELL:

Anna: send me information about party smart and PSA's

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS- SEN. S.TAYLOR:

SENATORIAL FORUM

Candon: thanks to everyone who voted for my bill

Van backer: Going to the statehouse last Wednesday as awesome. Next year if you have a chance, make sure you go down.

Sander: Jimmy great job and Emma great job putting the banquet together

Foster: I don't know if what we did with the gay marriage resolution changed the vote but I hope it make a difference. Keep fighting for the stuff you believe in.

Ash: I was really disappointed when the dietetic people were speaking, we weren't even at forum. That is unacceptable.

Glynne: Speaking of legitimacy the articles about Bob and the student death under investigation were in poor taste and if they wanted to be a legitimate paper they wouldn't be printing this crap.

SENATORIAL COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Glynne: socks won today and good luck UVM

ROLL CALL

FINANCE: Benay (excused) Howard (excused)

STUDENT ACTIVITIES: all present

COLA: all present

CODEEE: Just (excused)

STUDENT ACTION: all present

PR: Rifkin (excused)

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS: all present

ADJOURNMENT

MEETING ENDS: 10:28