

**Meeting Minutes:  
Meeting of the 2008-2009 Student Government Association Senate  
Tuesday, September 2, 2008**

Called to Order at: 7:03 pm

**ROLL CALL**

- Finance: all present
- Student Activities: all present
- COLA: Senator Glynne excused
- CODEEE: all present
- Student Action: all present
- Public Relations: Chair Krodel excused
- Academic Affairs: all present

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

- Minutes PASS.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

- Frank – no one to speak on public forum tonight, but please inform me if you'd like to bring someone in.

**EMERGENCY BUSINESS**

- Michel – Resolution Supporting the Amethyst Initiative
  - Michel – this initiative was started by students and is trying to determine which age is appropriate for adults to start drinking. It is just starting debate around the topic, not necessarily trying to lower the drinking age, and is right now just collecting signatures. I bring this up today as emergency business because the Board of Trustees meeting is this week, and although they wouldn't have to sign it, they could talk about it. Research is being done by psychologists and law makers to see if there is a way to reduce the number of alcohol related deaths by finding the most appropriate age to start drinking. This could be lower but it at least is providing valuable insight to the issue of underage drinking. Signing this statement doesn't agree to the proposals or attempts to lower the drinking age, just that we'd support and get involved in research of the topic and engage in discussion, but we would need President Fogel to sign this. And once the discussion has finished, UVM would align to the results of the discussion and debate.
  - Kennedy – I am all for opening up discussion, but I am confused about the difference between supporting and agreeing?
  - Michel – we aren't pledging to lower the drinking age, but just having Fogel sign to support the initiative.
  - Kennedy – if it is just having conversation then why does the Board of Trustees have to see it and why does President Fogel have to sign it?

- Miller – it'd be like taking this to congress and getting the legislature to talk about it, so we need to get the university President to sign this too, so either sign it and say we approve or say no to get the ball rolling.
- Mensah – how does the current drinking age of 21 relate to deaths because underage kids don't know how to drink properly?
- Michel – underage drinking causes 400-500 deaths per year, not including college campuses, so it is the idea that because it is illegal, it's more enticing.
- Issadore – drinking isn't a right granted by the government, so it seems a little too convoluted to say we expect the Board of Trustees and President Fogel to add our name to the list and we expect them to debate and expect them to develop policies, it is just a little confusing.
- Michel – the three things are different, it's just trying to spark debate, and not only will they sign their name but be responsible to stay until the end and hear the findings and results and implement them.
- Varsakopolous – who would be having debate?
- Michel – it's just like any other social debate, but it'd be brought forward to congress, but wouldn't be a specific place or event.
- Varsakopolous – are we saying we approve of open debate on campus?
- Michel – well yeah that would be fine but it is being brought to Washington and has already gotten tremendous news coverage.
- Sanders – I am behind it, I am just concerned about the 6<sup>th</sup> stanza, it seems to distract from the point of the resolution, and doesn't belong in a resolution going to the Board of Trustees.
- Michel – that aspect is actually pretty crucial because interest groups and individuals have worked to keep it 21 without any research or conversation.
- Sanders – I would make a friendly amendment to strike it, because I agree it is an important component of the debate but in this resolution it is distracting and makes it emotional.
- Michel – accepted.
- Ford-Hutchinson – why is this emergency business?
- Michel – because the Board of Trustees meeting is this week.
- PASSES.

#### NEW BUSINESS

- Sanders – Bill Derecognizing the 9/11 Truth Movement

#### OLD BUSINESS

- None.

#### EXECUTIVE REPORTS

- Treasurer Porter
  - Porter – I hope you all had a great summer and the treasurer's workshops are next week so tell people you know that are in clubs.
- Speaker Frank

- Frank – this will stay our normal meeting time, Tuesdays at 7pm, however the November 4<sup>th</sup> meeting will be cancelled due to election night. I am going to continue enforcing the standing when speaking rule. Also, during public forum there is still no eating or drinking. We have our retreat coming up and I will be doing a presentation on the difference between bills and resolutions. If you have legislation to present at a meeting, please have it to me by 8 am Monday morning. And if you pass legislation, please stay after to see me to collect all the signatures. We are also bringing in candidates to speak on public forum; we have 5 confirmed right now.
- Vice President Miller
  - Miller – you all looks sad, get excited! We have our Senate Retreat overnight Saturday, September 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> in Stowe. Be at the Davis Center at 8:15 am that Saturday and it is absolutely mandatory. We are flying in a lecturer to speak about diversity and will also working with CODEEE. We have lots of fun programs planned and you get a fleece. I'm not standing for people who don't want to come, we do a lot of important things like learning to right bills and resolutions, how to debate with Roberts Rules, and set forth our goals for the year. In terms of appointments, we have 7 applications for the 4 available spots, 2 on campus and 2 off campus, I am not sure when it'll happen but we are at quorum now. We'll bring forth 4 people for the 4 spots after exec has deliberated, so talk to your committee chairs if you want to review the applicants. There are a lot of campus-wide committees, I have already sent out e-mails to 200+ departments, but the spots aren't for senators, so e-mail me any contact information of students you know would be interested, and hopefully we'll have up to 100 students on committees by the end of the semester. I have sent a personal e-mail to all of you, only got about 12 replies, which I understand because the summer is busy, but we'll be sending out e-mails almost every day s please check daily. This is a great week to talk to your constituents and figure out how students are feeling. If you want to get more involved within SGA or the school, please come see us. I hope to see you all in the office regularly. Exec, please meet in my office after the meeting. I had one on ones with some senators last semester, but would like to meet with all of you.
  - Corthell – when will we be done on the Sunday of the retreat?
  - Miller – we come back to the Davis Center Sunday morning to do a workshop and will be done around 2:15 pm, but I will send the itinerary.
  - Benay – so we can't drive our own cars?
  - Miller – no, I'd rather we not.
- President Taylor
  - Taylor – over the past 4 years, we've had a lot of unbudgeted expenses, but an account was just located that was lost and has \$22 million in it because before VSAC was established, UVM did student loans and this account includes those repayments, so it has \$7 million available now, and the rest will become available over the years as the loans are repaid. So

they are doing an extensive overview of our budget as we have a new CFO/ Vice President of Financial Affairs, so it will at least rewrite the unbudgeted expenses. The lynx will be coming out soon and is our web-based data management system for student clubs and organizations. Its capabilities include campus and organization elections online, being the first secure online election we've ever had. Right now it is just a demo and there will be more on it at retreat. The first implementation of it will happen next Wednesday for the 1<sup>st</sup> year elections. I have granted access to the list serve to the Cynic and the Water Tower. I don't have to do that but if anyone has a problem with it, let me know. They prefer not to report anything just from e-mail, but I want to remind you all not to report anything from executive session. Additionally I am going to give them all your contact information, if you don't want them to have your cell phone number, just cross your name off the list I am passing around. Several colleges are looking for new deans, including CALS, Rubenstein, and the School of Business, as well as Student Financial Services seeking a new Director. Megan Benay is already a student representative on that committee. The Student Rights and Responsibilities document is under review, and the Academic Affairs committee will serve on the Student Integrity Council. In terms of Hockey promotions, the Department of Athletics markets the games a family event, and there have been suggestions of no student section due to student behavior. You're indirectly funding athletics whether you want to or not, so we are going to make t-shirts with the words to the fight song on it so it'll encourage students to use that instead of the current lyrics. The Temporary Structures Policy is under review, which affects things like Tent City, Shanty Town, etcetera, so we want to include students from those organizations.

- Corthell – who gets my number if I say okay to this?
- Taylor – the news team of the Cynic, or at least the reporter, but others would have access to it.
- Issadore – why do they need our cell numbers and not just our e-mails?
- Taylor – because the Cynic has a lot of deadlines, and people procrastinate with e-mails, so it can just be easier to call. And without a UVM password, I could find all your e-mails through the directory, so I am just asking that you're willing to give them your cell numbers.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Finance, Chair: Senator Issadore
  - Issadore – I was only in the SGA office about 3 times this summer, so not a lot to report.
  - Miller – when do supplemental funding hearings start, and will you be letting people know?
  - Issadore – yes, I will send out an e-mail.
- Student Activities, Chair: Senator Sander
  - Sanders – we have the Student Organizations Management Workshop Sunday the 14<sup>th</sup> which is mandatory for all clubs and we need volunteers.

- COLA, Chair: Senator Shackett
  - Shackett – I made it to the office a lot over the summer and spent a lot of time in the Office of Student and Community Relations. We've been looking at different web designers since we have money for that to make a UVM website addressing safe partying. The Vermont Student Opinions Poll on Alcohol and Other Drugs is coming out and is being run by the Center for Health and Wellbeing because they want it to be more statistically accurate. We'll soon be hosting another off campus living workshop. We'll be collaborating with Student Life to connect the Have a Heart Program with Party Smart. Mandy and I have been contacting candidates to come in and speak. We did a Campus Safety Walk last week with administration, physical plant, and electricians, and even after the findings of our lighting audit there hasn't been a lot done. Jay and I sit on the Burlington Lighting Group Committee and will see that it's getting addressed. My committee is now narrowing our goals down to specific initiatives, because although we tend to do the same stuff from year to year, there is other stuff that comes up. I've met with Gail, Alicia, and Joe Spiedel to plan out the first semester and this Friday from 2-4 pm there will be a Community Coalition at 12 Colchester Avenue, to talk about everything that's going on in Burlington. Gail received many e-mails saying that this past Saturday and Sunday nights on North and South Willard were the worst they've seen in years because of the massive freshman class. This time around we are going to do the Have a Heart campaign earlier so we can hit them before they go out and are drunk, so we'll be tabling at the dining halls, so please sign up because we are working hard to address noise issues this year. This year we'll also be talking about new buildings and tuition prices. And we'll be working with the Burlington Police to do ride along to see what the police deal with on Friday and Saturday nights.
  - Frank – there's a new university policy that says we have to invite all candidates on the ballot, so we wrote letters to all the political candidates and have 3 confirmed for September 16<sup>th</sup>, and others confirmed for October 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>.
- CODEEE, Chair: Senator Kennedy
  - Kennedy – good job to Chair Shackett for getting so much done this summer. Just an update on the Red Cross, but there hasn't been a lot of communication from them or the administration or any response to Kesha's memorandum of understanding, making it difficult for us to do much, so we'll continue to work on peaceful progress and monitor on-campus blood drives. We'll be talking more about diversity issues but more in the context of white privilege and we'll possibly be doing a workshop on identity, so please attend. We're also trying to get plastic bags off campus, so we'll perhaps work with Student Action on that. We also want to connect with student clubs that work towards similar things as we do.
  - Goodman – why do we want to get rid of plastic bags?

- Kennedy – because it is a waste of resources and another thing we can eliminate, and it'd also save Sodexo money.
- Student Action, Chair: Senator Abda
  - Abda – we're working on the meal plan task force and we're looking for students to sit on that committee so let me or Bob know of anyone that is interested and there are regular meetings as it is a big topic that we want to keep moving forward. I'm meeting with a member of custodial services to work on getting hand sanitizer stations around campus. Just a reminder to send students to ticks me off so we can address their concerns and talk about them.
  - Ford-Hutchinson – the DC Art Committee is having its first meeting this Friday. In terms of the Campus Safety walk, there isn't a lot of progress happening off-campus, but a lot on. They've switched to LED lighting which needs to be replaced less, saves money and energy, and they've done the same thing with the blue emergency lights too. The university green is owned by Burlington, that's why the sidewalks are so bad. We have a walkway limit and there needs to be a certain amount of green space. So if you see a light out off-campus, report it.
  - Dru-Ellis – in terms of everything going on with the FDA, letters are going out Monday to 72 schools and we're not just asking for petitions, but also for a resolution or bill of support from those bodies to start conducting research. I'm meeting next Tuesday with Provost Hughes about scholarships because you can't get them from administration as an upperclassmen, you can only get them from your colleges.
  - Benay – who have you talked to about scholarships?
  - Dru-Ellis – I got called from Provost Hughes, people in Finance and the Scholarship Office.
- Public Relations, Chair: Senator Krodel
  - Aldrich – Chair Krodel is at an LSAT class tonight, so he'll e-mail you.
- Academic Affairs, Chair: Senator Taylor
- Elections, Chair: Senator Corthell
  - Corthell – today we got started on the 1<sup>st</sup> year elections and have had 42 packets taken out so there's a lot of interest, but I'm working on getting the posting policy figured out.
  - S.Taylor – welcome back, I'm happy to be back. I feel good about the direction of our committee, although we may possibly be a little behind. We're focusing on 5 things but aren't exclusive to them: first, following up on a resolution passed last year on issues surrounding textbooks and placing textbooks over \$75 on reserve in the library, and exploring ethical considerations with professors requiring books they've authored or have a financial deal with certain companies. Secondly, the priority registration system currently in place. Thirdly, working with the registrar's office to do course evaluations and providing more information when signing up for classes. Fourthly, we're starting an Academic Excellence Program and will publish a manual accompanying that event.

- Van Backer – on texts, would that include using texts authored by other faculty in the department?
- S.Taylor – yeah, it'd be good to know.

#### SENATORIAL FORUM

- Frank – there was previously a restriction that you could only talk about stuff that was discussed during that senate meeting, but any student issue is allowed to be brought up, just keep all personal comments and announcements separate.
- Mensah – we're looking at the judicial system for students on campus through the Peer Judicial Board (PJB) and we're interviewing students for the position over the phone, so we'll be coming in to speak to you about the PJB so you know what's happening.

#### SENATORIAL COMMENTS

- Frank – Senator Michel, please stay after to discuss the legislation you passed tonight. Also, I'm having people over my house this weekend.
- Van Backer – if you have any first-year friends that want to join Rescue, send them my way.
- Benay – we're having a Hillel BBQ on Friday at 5:30 pm at the Allen House
- Mensah – this Thursday from 5-7 pm at the Women's Center there is a Welcome Back BBQ and Saturday from 1-4 pm LGBTQA is having a Welcome Back BBQ at the Allen House
- Corthell – NFL season starts Thursday!
- Miller – exec, please come to my office after this, and congratulations to Senator Michel for passing the first legislation.
- Taylor – the Amythyst Initiative has already passed by 129 colleges, so hopefully we'll be joining the good company, and the point of the movement is that we don't know the solution but there's a problem. The first 3 nights of school were ridiculous and it just shows that drinking is a priority for students, and it's limiting because our educational process doesn't allow us to educate on drinking but they do on everything else. So I am glad the legislation passed and there is already momentum.

#### ROLL CALL

- Finance: all present
- Student Activities: all present
- COLA: Senator Glynne excused
- CODEEEE: all present
- Student Action: all present
- Public Relations: Chair Krodell excused
- Academic Affairs: all present

Adjourned at: 8:22 pm