

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

Called to Order at: 7:09pm

ROLL CALL

- Finance: Senators Mallea and Benay excused
- Student Activities: Senator Tofferi excused
- COLA: all present
- CODEEE: all present
- Student Action: all present
- Public Relations: Senator Corthell excused
- Academic Affairs: Senator Robertson excused

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- Minutes Tabled until next week.

PUBLIC FORUM

- David Zuckerman, State Representative Elect
 - Zuckerman – I just wanted to come in and say hello and thank you. This year was a really big election. There's not a lot happening between the election and when the session begins in January, except for the race for speaker. There are 3 democrats running because statewide they hold the majority in the legislature but they'll be voting this Saturday. The concentration of power in Vermont is strong than in other states because the speaker chooses the committees and the chairs. That determination will happen throughout December but won't be announced until session starts. So I really came in for you to tell me your thoughts going into next year. Given the financial crisis, I know you and State Representative Elect Kesha Ram will be pushing for higher education funding.
 - Glynne – thanks for coming in and congratulations. I've heard a lot of time will be spent in this upcoming session on financial issues. Should the SGA lend support and show our faces, or would it be a waste of time?
 - Zuckerman – yes, it'd be a good idea for a lot of reasons. In the past, senators have come as UVM hosts a day at the State House. But given your expertise in what you're studying of if you plan to work and live in Vermont, it would be helpful to us. You need to connect to the right people so make sure you're well prepared and your time is well spent. There are 14 committees in the State House and certain committees look at spending, taxing, economic policy, finance, and budget issues so those would be the ones you'd want to talk to. There can be different issues being dealt with all the time by different committees so just know who you need to speak with.

- Viadero-Lopez – are you willing to compromise with the democrats? And what can be done with the financial crisis?
- Zuckerman – there's a battle storm around elections and there is a misconception on how much we do work together. The media exploits it because controversial news sells better. 98% of the votes last year were unanimous, so the party lines aren't as strong as people think. We work very cooperatively. For example, the prior speaker was a democrat and she named me and a republican as chairs of very important committees, so it is more about what people bring to the table, not their parties.
- Michel – are your votes all public?
- Zuckerman – yes, but not all are a roll call votes, some were just voice votes. But I'm not sure how many roll call votes there were last year.
- Michel – have you ever received flax for being in the opposing minority on a vote and has it ever affected the way you voted?
- Zuckerman – I haven't received much flax for my opinions even if I am in the minority in the State House. And in my district, I'm usually not in the minority, and have been a leader in my district and have gained a lot of support and was re-elected.

EMERGENCY BUSINESS

- Sanders – Bill Recognizing Club Tennis
 - Sanders – they would compete in regular tournaments and practice to build skills as there are no other competitive organizations, beside varsity. If they were recognized they would have tryouts this weekend and be able to register for tournaments.
 - Club Tennis – we want to provide a competitive environment for higher level players and give them the ability to exercise their talent. And for lower level players we want to give them the ability to learn. And give everyone the ability to practice with others of a similar skill level.
 - Issadore – if you have tryouts this weekend, what has been the interest level so far?
 - Club Tennis – we're accepting everyone that is interested and that comes to our information session tonight, but I've gotten 76 personal e-mails, so there will be a lot of people.
 - Jones – so would the tryouts be for playing in tournaments or just to be on the club team?
 - Club Tennis – I want the club to be as big as possible but there can only be 16 practicing players and only 10 can go to tournament. And then we'll have an 8 person waiting list.
 - Wong – would the tournaments be a part of the club?
 - Club Tennis – the US Tennis Association sets up Club Tennis College Tournaments and they're all intercollegiate.
 - Whitmore – why wasn't this brought up earlier and is coming up now at the end of the semester?

- Sanders – the club approached me at the beginning of the semester but putting a sports organization together takes a long time because there are a lot of additional logistics.
- S.Taylor – do you have a stringer machine?
- Club Tennis – yes, our coach does.
- Sanders – so would the 16 people be the only ones on the team?
- Club Tennis – only the 16 would practice and travel but anyone can join and help with fundraising, but wouldn't have to pay the dues.
- Jones – will you have enough funding to compete in tournaments?
- Club Tennis – we've been working with a t-shirt company and are planning a raffle and a dinner and we'll also have dues for members which will help support travel expenses.
- Van-Backer – will members get PE credit and will it only be for the 16?
- Sanders – yeah, most clubs sports do, but Leon has to approve it.
- PASSES.

NEW BUSINESS

- Jones – Resolution Supporting the Victims Bill of Rights
- Viadero-Lopez – Resolution for Bicycle Audit
- Paquette – Bill Recognizing UVM Rescue as Club of the Fortnight
- Taylor – Bill on Priority Registration

OLD BUSINESS

- Frank – Constitutional Amendments
 - Article 3, section 1
 - PASSES
 - Article 3, section 2, A, B, and C
 - Mensah – would we publicize that we had vacancies and fill them even if there were less than 5?
 - Frank – that'd be under the discretion of the Chair of Elections but if there is less than 5 then there is no need for mid-term elections.
 - Just – I think we should have them even if there is only 1 spot.
 - Frank – we chose 5 because it represents the number of 1st year seats and is enough that it doesn't danger the democratic process.
 - Just – I think 4 appointments are a lot, we should hold them even for 1.
 - Viadero-Lopez – we have spring elections and first-year elections, if we have too many we look like a circus.
 - Issadore – I agree, appointing 4 is a lot.
 - Ford-Hutchinson – change 5 to 4? PASSES
 - Mensah – change 4 to 3? DOESN'T PASS
 - PASSES
 - Article 3, section 2, D, F, J, K, and L
 - Wong – I think appointments are a lot of work for a single person to do and decide, so they shouldn't just be up to the VP.

- Just – do we or have we ever had an SGA Code of Conduct? If we don't, shouldn't we?
 - Sanders – a bill was passed called the Clubs in Good Standing Bill, but it has nothing to do with Senate.
 - Viadero-Lopez – adding more documents to the constitution is just unnecessary.
 - Frank – bills within the constitution do get lost, so we should have something but it should go in the bi-laws.
 - Michel – why not use the Code of Conduct we hold our clubs to?
 - Sanders – it doesn't really apply.
 - PASSES
- Article 3, section 2, M, O1, and O2
 - Just – there is no where that addresses how to evaluate student concerns it just says they'll handle them.
 - Frank – this has to do with them seeking out concerns beyond just addressing the ones they receive.
 - PASSES
- Article 3, section 2, O3, O4, O5, O6, and O7
 - Just – why change from monthly to regularly?
 - Sanders – because we do it more than that sometimes and we don't want to restrict it to any specific time period.
 - Frank – it gives the discretion to the committee.
 - Whitmore – but people's perceptions of regular can be different.
 - Mensah – we do it as many times as we need and this gives us the leeway to do what is necessary.
 - Frank – it's subjective because clubs are unique, which is a good thing, and they have different needs.
 - Wong – what if we added to it and said at least monthly?
 - Issadore – it's easier to give them the leeway, we're just nit picking now.
 - Van Backer – this is working for the Chair now so keep it how it is, and it can be interpreted in the future.
 - Viadero-Lopez – we should listen and trust what the Chair says.
 - PASSES
- Article 5, section 2
 - PASSES
- Article 6, section 1
 - Frank – the President and VP appoint all the other Chairs, so why not the Chair of Elections.
 - PASSES
- Article 6, section 2
 - PASSES
- Article 6, section 3
 - Glynne – I think it's important for the speaker to administer the oath.
 - Rifken – but the speaker still gets to swear in senators too.

- Issadore – isn't it usually the former President and VP that swear them in and shouldn't it be that?
 - Frank – yes, you're right it is.
 - PASSES
 - Article 6, section 4
 - PASSES
 - Article 6, section 5
 - PASSES
- Crowley – Resolution Supporting Dining Services Use of Sustainable Bags
 - Crowley – I've been working with Dining Services to eliminate non-recyclable plastic bags to use recyclable paper bags and we also want to encourage students to purchase the cloth bags and re-use them.
 - Whitmore – will paper bags always be available as the norm?
 - Crowley – yes and they'll first finish using the plastic they have left.
 - Abda – have you talked about using biodegradable plastic bags?
 - Crowley – no, there haven't been any conversations that I know of.
 - Glynne – what would be any costs incurred by switching?
 - Crowley – there would be no significant difference and Dining Services has already bought them and committed to switching.
 - Wilkinson-Ray – do you know where they bought their paper bags from?
 - Crowley – I'm not sure.
 - PASSES
- Maciewicz – Voter Transparency Act
 - Maciewicz – the SGA is a democratic body elected to represent the student body and there is no current record of votes, eliminating a part of history and not giving the students the information they'll need to evaluate senators and make informed decisions when voting. It shall be documented by the speaker and be made available on the website one week after a vote.
 - Van Backer – if implemented, how long would it take?
 - Jones – I've talked to the executive board and they're willing to divide up the recording part and I understand the time concerns, but we waste a lot of time in here so at least this will be beneficial.
 - Glynne – I have a slight issue with the time it'll take but more so, how we vote on controversial issues is important, but it shouldn't be mandatory for everything, it should be optional. This encourages the silent minority to stay quiet and personally, I was a victim last year.
 - Issadore – I think it should say upon request, and not be mandatory.
 - Jones – it'd be mandated for bills and resolutions, not for constitutional amendments, or informal polls. If we had transparency, Senator Glynne wouldn't have been singled out last year.
 - Just – we model ourselves after Congress, we aren't trying to be them. It's important to shed light and give the student body their voice.
 - Jones – I think minorities should be strong and proud of their opinions and this is a way the SGA can improve their relations with the student body.

- Viadero-Lopez – we should motion to use it because it could make people vote in the majority and not voice their opinions.
- Dru-Ellis – I don't think voter transparency would've affected Senator Glynne last year with the ARC resolution. How would this be affected by blind votes? It needs to be amended so it's not mandatory.
- Candon – I know if I were to express a minority viewpoint with Voter Transparency, it'd be restrained. It's only going to be used to look at the negative data because no one reads bills or resolutions or comes to Senate meetings. It seems like it'll hurt us more than we'll benefit from it.
- Weiland – I think it should be made more specific on when it'll happen and who would type the data?
- Just – the executive board would record but the speaker would document.
- Krodel – the website is PR's responsibility but I myself cannot update it, so Jess would have to do all this.
- Sanders – Senators should be accountable for how they vote because you're elected to vote. If you have a conflict of interest, you should abstain. It's created to show who voted which ways on controversial issues. I'm concerned that making it mandatory for all bills and resolutions is a lot because some things don't affect the student body.
- Issadore – amend to say passed by 7 senators?
- DOESN'T PASS

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

- Treasurer Porter
 - n/a
- Speaker Frank
 - Thanks for hanging in there with the constitutional amendments; we won't be meeting again until the spring. Because the resolution tonight was voted down, you can reconsider and bring it up again.
 - Glynne – if a resolution is voted down, doesn't someone that voted no have to reintroduce it?
 - Yes.
- President Taylor
 - I'm working on a no hazing awareness in light of what happened with the sailing club but I need help from risk management and the student hazing committee. All Greeks are required to sign a no hazing document and athletics also does a lot of awareness, so our clubs should too.
 - The BOT are in town this weekend and I'll be presenting my report to them and will address budget concerns and an increase of \$4 to the student activities fee. Chair Shackett and Chair Issadore will also be representing the SGA at separate committee meetings.
 - The Graduate Student Senate is trying to get recognition as they currently exist as their own entity and aren't recognized by the university as a governing body, they only recognize us and the faculty senate and the staff council. I support the GSS being recognized as a governing body and will

be writing a personal letter of support but there will also be a piece of legislation coming up to support them too.

- I met with the provost before break to talk about the financial crisis and he's doing a lot for us. He's worked to encourage faculty to reduce text book costs. He's also working on a standard syllabus.
- We have a \$22 million budget gap for the next 2 fiscal years, but we're doing better than our peer schools. I'll pass around the information I received at the budget meeting but we seem to be in a much better position than perceived.
- I have hockey tickets, come get them if you want them; it's against the U-18 team.
- President Fogel sent out an e-mail today saying we're using this situation as an opportunity to restructure the budget and eliminate positions permanently as well as reassign positions, including the possibility of termination. The outcome of the budget advisors meeting was a document of principles to protect the student experience and will be sent out to the directors, VPs, and deans next week.
- Glynne – will tuition increase be on the agenda for the BOT meeting?
- There will be more discussion in February but that is usually set in the May meeting.
- Van Backer – does the College of Medicine fall under the GSS?
- No, they have their own association and pay a \$65 fee but also support this because they'd be a recognized body under it too.
- Vice President Kennedy
 - I sent an email about absences, it's not meant to be frightening, but we need to start having an open discussion about it.
 - We're having a holiday potluck on Friday December 12th. I can book space on campus or at someone's house and I'll be doing committee food assignments.
 - There will be a retreat on January 24th and 25th which is a Saturday and Sunday. It's 2 days and it's mandatory, but it's not overnight.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Finance, Chair: Senator Issadore
 - Email report.
- Student Activities, Chair: Senator Sander
 - Email report, but sign up for the ALANA student breakfast this Friday.
- COLA, Chair: Senator Shackett
 - Email report
- CODEEE, Chair: Senator Jones
 - Email report
- Student Action, Chair: Senator Abda
 - Email report
- Public Relations, Chair: Senator Krodel
 - Email report but I want to encourage senators to pay attention to motions.
- Academic Affairs, Chair: Senator Taylor

- Email report but next week we'll be presenting a resolution on priority registration. Senator Robertson did a lot of research and we'll email you the details.

SENATORIAL FORUM

- Issadore – motion to adjourn pending roll call.
 - PASSES

ROLL CALL

- Finance: Senators Mallea, Benay, Howard excused
- Student Activities: Senator Tofferi excused
- COLA: all present
- CODEEE: all present
- Student Action: all present
- Public Relations: Senator Corthell excused
- Academic Affairs: Senator Robertson excused

Adjourned at: 10:05pm