

**Date: December 3, 2013**

**Session Opening:** Start time 7:00 pm; start time with recorder (00:00)

### **ROLL CALL**

SAC: All Present

SA: Senator Falques excused

CODEE: Senators Martinez, Cares excused

Finance: Senator DaGama excused

AA: Senator Kane excused

PR: All Present

COLA: All Present

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:** November 19, 2013 Minutes approved.

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

CHRISTIAN MATTHEWS: Meeting minutes have not been posted since the 5<sup>th</sup>. The agenda hasn't been posted since October. I'd like to express my disappointment regarding the outcome of the UVM Confessions Resolution. I was disappointed when I found out that one third of you abstained from voting. I'd like to thank Senator Lott for pointing out that I was wrong in the trademark, but only by 2 days. It's embarrassing that only 6 or 7 people voted affirmatively on it. This wasn't a trademark issue; it was a free speech issue. For those of you that voted yes, I really appreciated that you at least took a stand. Young Americans for Liberty has been working a lot with FIRE, the Foundation for Individual Rights and Education. We will be posting legislation soon regarding free speech issues. I hope that will pass. In regards to the vote and its outcome, it would almost seem as though we need some sort of electoral turnover. Young Americans for Liberty is going to be fielding candidates for the next election. It matters to us if you voted no. As an ex-senator, the group that is asking for money, VT Students for Animal Protection, has not been active in my experience.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### Bill Allocating Funds to VT Students for Animal Protection

Chair Asher: In response to Senator Matthew's comments, I've been working with VT Students for Animal Protection since the beginning of the semester. The entire cost for the event is much more than the \$2,800 we'd like to allocate to them. They worked really hard and were able to get other outside funds. I'd really appreciate everyone's support on this.

Bill read by Chair Asher

Annie: We would like Carol Adams to come to UVM. She is a scholar who writes on feminism and vegetarianism. These are two areas of interest that people think are very disparate. The hope of this talk is that those interested in one of these topics will come and be exposed to new ideas. Additionally, there are classes at UVM that are specific to these topics that would like her to come and speak one on one to the class.

Question by Senator Lott: What does this club do? What is the full cost of the speaker? Where did you get the money from? What's your fundraising?

Annie: The original name of the club was STAR, Students Animal Rights. They didn't do a lot. I am the new president this year and we're trying to change that. We changed the name. It's going to cost \$6,200 plus travel and lodging. We're working with campus programming, the Department of Environmental Studies, the Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Mood Studies, and the Department of Philosophy to fund this event.

Question by Chair Ducharme: What do you see this club doing in the future?

Annie: This event will be the last thing we will do next semester, April 22. We will be working with wildlife rehabilitators and going to a sanctuary. We're working on a protest project. We tried to get a documentary screening but due to constraints, like cable access, that didn't work. We work closely with a local animal rights group.

Chair Kaufman: Since Annie took over, this club has been considered in good standing by the SAC and Finance committees. We have been in contact multiple times with the club this semester.

Question by Senator Lott: How many students are in the club? Is it already set in stone that Carol Adams is coming to speak?

Annie: We have a contract that has been reviewed by UVM that has not been signed. We have 10-15 very active members and 107 members on our Listserv.

Question by Chair Al-Namee: When will this event be held? Are you collaborating with other campus organizations in organizing this?

Annie: April 22, Earth Day, as part of the Earth Week festivities that UVM is holding. We're working on funding with Environmental Studies, Gender, Sexuality, & Women Studies, and Philosophy. CAS and the Women Center have both agreed to publicize the event.

Chair Asher: We don't like to consider requests where the contract is already signed.

Senator Lott: I suggest that if another organization is going to pay for it, we should not use SGA money, so I urge you all not to vote for this.

Senator Kayser: Do you already have the rest of the funds other than the \$2,800?

Annie: Yes.

Senator Madowitz: How does feminism relate to VT Students for Animal Protection?

Annie: Her talk is about showing how the feminist viewpoint coincides with the animal rights viewpoint. I had the same reaction you had. I highly recommend her book, and if she comes, I highly recommend

Chair Kauffman: I would just like to point out that the finance committee goes through each of these, reviews them, and asks a lot of these questions. They don't bring bills up here unless they feel that we should be allocating the money. It's strictly a formality.

Yield floor to President Daley.

President Daley: Although we do administer the money, this is not SGA money. This is student's money. If the VT Students for Animal Protection believes this will benefit the student body and the finance committee agrees, I will be more than happy to sign this.

Yield floor to Treasurer Barry.

Treasurer Barry: We have worked with this club in the finance office and discussed the speaker coming in, and that's why the contract is not yet signed. This is a behavior that we, as part of SGA, reward. We like when people go elsewhere to ask for funding before coming to SGA. We don't look at this as wasting our money, we look at this as enhancing the student experience at UVM. I think that when all of you vote tonight

Question by Senator Hershey: What is your projected attendance for the event, roughly?

Annie: I contacted Carol Adams to find out attendance of her past events. In most of her talks, they had to move to different rooms because there were so many students. In conjunction with campus programming, we were planning on having it in one of the ballrooms, with a predicted audience of 300 people.

Motion to call the bill to question, seconded.

Vote to call the bill to question, passes.

Vote on bill, passes. Division 25-3-3

#### Bill Allocating Funds to Men's Club Lacrosse

Chair Asher: Men's Club Lacrosse is requesting funds for uniforms. Uniform requests can be every 3 years. The club has remained active and in good standing over the past 3 years.

Bill read by Chair Asher

Club Member: We plan on using the uniforms for our tryout team in the spring. It's a pretty serious team. We just joined a league and our league requires we have matching uniforms. We collect a security deposit from all team members so that we make sure we get them back.

Treasurer Barry: We would like you to note that club lacrosse actually had funding for uniforms 3 years ago, but because of an error in our bookkeeping, we never reimbursed them for uniforms. They are far out of the gap where they would be eligible for uniforms. They haven't had them in about 6 years. On behalf of the finance office, I strongly urge everyone to vote in support. We did wrong the team and this is one of our ways in helping to correct that error.

Question by Senator Lott: How many members are on the team? Are there any dues? What fundraising do you do?

Club Member: We had 50 members in the fall paying dues \$60/person. For the spring, we cut the team to 35 members. We don't know what our dues will be for the spring.

Question by Senator Madowitz: There are 50 members but you need 35 uniforms?

Club Member: We had 50 members in the fall. We are cutting to 35 members in the spring as it is the competitive season. We can't have more than 35 members.

Question by Senator Crawford: What is the security deposit and is that on top of the dues?

Club Member: Each uniform is \$60 plus about \$18 for decals. The security deposit is on top of the dues.

Question by Senator Madowitz: What do the uniforms include?

Club Member: 2 pairs of shorts, 2 pairs of tops, and helmet decals.

Question by Senator Lott: How well does the team do?

Club Member: In our past 5 games, we won 2 and lost 3. We went into overtime in 2 of those games.

Motion to call the bill to question, seconded.

Vote to call the bill to question, seconded.

Vote on bill, passes.

## **EMERGENCY BUSINESS**

### Financial Policy Changes

Motion to open operational documents, seconded.

Motion to amend operational documents.

Yield floor to Chair Asher.

Chair Asher: I wanted to announce my committee's full confidence in these documents. We're going to be working with Treasurer Barry. He's going to oversee three subgroups within my committee, each composed of two people. Towards the end of the process, we're going to all get together and go over everything.

Yield floor to Treasurer Barry.

Treasurer Barry: The last time these documents were updated was FY 2009. These are outdated and needed to be changed for our body. We have sent these out to the body twice now. Some of you sent us very good feedback, which we took. This was our small sub committee reaching out to everyone else. We reached out to club signers and various departments to get feedback.

Speaker Conlon: Last year, I started talking about the operational documents. I urged everyone to review the ones they were responsible for. Treasurer Barry is the only one who did and I commend him on that. I have a lot of confidence on these.

Treasurer Barry: The first things we did when we wrote these documents was throw out the old ones and started over with a blank document. We thought that was very important to start fresh.

Question by Chair Al-Namee: I was involved in meetings with Treasurer Barry and President Daley. I definitely encourage you to consider the effort that was put into this.

Question by Senator Lott: Can you explain the two unfinished sections?

Treasurer Barry: These two sections were purposely left unfinished. We are still working with UVM Foundation to clear up the Gift Fund section. UVM Foundation is no longer within UVM so it has made it more difficult. The other section was the one on hiring practices. I didn't want to postpone the amendments for the entire operational documents because of these two sections. I will be opening these documents up again in the spring to add these sections in.

Vote on proposed amendments, passes.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **EXECUTIVE REPORTS**

SPEAKER CONLON: I plan to work on the operational documents over winter break. I think that is the worst part of our documents. I'm trying to follow Treasurer Barry's example. I've already gone through them and made lots of notes.

VP BIRMINGHAM: Yesterday, I went downtown to select the hats for our giveaway. The color scheme was picked out primarily by Senators Renaud and Kayser. I'd like your input on how many we should order, because if we order more than 300, we get a discount. They're going to say "#UVMVoice." I'd like to thank Chair Al-Namee for her help with the Holiday Banquet. I wish you the best on all of your finals. If you are not going to be returning next semester, please let me know.

Question by Senator Maslow: When will the hats be distributed?

VP Birmingham: The hockey game on February 15.

Question by Chair Al-Namee: Do you think it's possible to update the awards boards?

VP Birmingham: I actually spoke to Speaker Conlon today on that. Yes, I'll work on that.

Chair Bowen: In the past, we have done water bottle giveaways. It would be great to get more than 300 hats so we can use them as giveaways this year. Are we buying water bottles this year?

VP Birmingham: In the past we've given away water bottles or pens that people don't like. I think it'd be nice to order more than 300 hats so we can use them as giveaways. It's a nice PR initiative.

Question by Chair Redell: Did PR work with you on the giveaways?

VP Birmingham: Indirectly, yes.

Yield floor to Chair Pope-McGraw.

Chair Pope-McGraw: He has consulted me but this has been largely VP Birmingham's initiative.

Question by Senator Maslow: How much are the hats going to cost?

VP Birmingham: We're waiting on a quote right now. Once we receive the quote, Treasurer Barry is going to negotiate with them so that we can receive the best deal.

PRESIDENT DALEY: I would like to apologize for leaving early last meeting. I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving break. I was here Monday, Tuesday, and part of Wednesday morning. I had meetings in Waterman. I've had a question about scheduling and final exam scheduling. We're looking at the possibility of scheduling all classes during a certain time period on certain days. 35% of courses don't actually use their final exam period, so we're looking to see if we can more efficiently schedule finals and possibly have a shorter finals week. Thank you very much for passing the changes to the financial operational documents. I very much appreciate everyone's work. Senator of the Week this week goes to everyone. Other than that, yesterday I had meetings with university colleagues and others. In addition to my duties with this body, I'll have further such meetings later this week.

Question by Senator Lott: Where have your required weekly emails been this past month?

President Daley: I sent out a couple of messages. One just went out today, in conjunction with IRA regarding the naked bike ride. I received feedback that many students didn't open the emails. I'd rather send out special emails rather than necessary weekly ones. Every Wednesday and Friday, I go to the fish bowl and interact with students during lunch.

Chair Redell: I have sent out a few emails with President Daley. It came from my address but they were signed from both of us.

TREASURER BARRY: Thank you for passing the financial operational documents. That has been a huge project within SGA for the past 7 months or so. Thank you to Senator Lott who gave us great constructive feedback. Organizational spending will be stopping next week. Not only do the SGA offices slow down during winter break, so does UVM. We are in very good financial shape as we end the semester. We have had a large number of professional development requests. The professional development fund is a fund that exists for students outside of clubs. We actually had two people come in this week with requests. They have both been selected for a very high honor. It's great that SGA is able to support people like this within our community because it looks great for both UVM and SGA. I'll be working on some transitional documents over break. My goal is to make a smoother transition for my successors.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

SAC: Our committee has finally finished all club check-ins. They are, for the most part, considered in good standing. We are going to be having club check-ins before their budgets are due. We are going to be using those to evaluate them. Now that everyone knows their second semester schedules, if you would be able to help us, that would be

great. We would really appreciate it if you could give us a couple of office hours a week at the beginning of next semester. We are also going to be working on the derecognition process.

SA: Thank you for all the hard work this semester. I'm looking forward to a good semester in the spring. We've been formulating a lot of ideas to work on for next semester. The shuttle bus to the airport went very well and that will be continued.

Question by VP Birmingham: Did we reserve rooms for finals in the DC?

Chair Bowen: Yes, I have the spreadsheet of available rooms and times. I will send that to PR to post.

Question by Senator Crespo: Is the Megabus back on campus?

Chair Bowen: Yes, the Megabus is now back in front of Royal Tyler.

CODEE: We are preparing for the spring semester. We plan on continuing to collaborate with IRA in the future. It was very productive.

FINANCE: Thank you for passing the financial documents. We are going over our plans for how we are going to approach the budget this year. Today, we met with Squash. Squash requested \$800 for uniforms. They're on track to qualify for nationals this year. We also met with the Student Medical Society. They requested \$1,700 to send 6 people to a conference in Tennessee for medical training.

AA: Next spring is going to be very busy for AA. It comes up every 3 years. We are going to make sure that student voice is heard. We are going to continue our work with the Hub and the library as we have been.

PR: Over break, I will be creating a presentation on the role of PR to present to senate. If you have anything you want me to address on that, feel free to email me.

COLA: My committee and the Dewey House will be volunteering at the Miller Community Rec Center in the New North End this Saturday. It's a holiday fair for kids. They need people to interact with children. If you drive yourself, you don't have to stay the whole time. Senator Reilly is working with OSCR and buddying up with kids that live in the neighborhoods to hand out cookies for students studying in the library for finals. Tomorrow, Senator Akkeh and I are filming a video for our online tutorial with the director of code enforcement. We're having community coalition this Friday at 3. It's a holiday party and you're all invited. Senator Akkeh is studying abroad next semester. I'm so appreciative of all her hard work. She planned and went to almost every single neighborhood cleanup.

## **SENATORIAL FORUM**

Senator Hickey: Can you clarify the process of how the finance committee comes up with the amounts to allocate funds to clubs?

Yield floor to Chair Asher.

Chair Asher: We want to allocate the funds as efficiently as possible to grow the UVM community where we can. We have hearings and we ask them lots of questions.

Treasurer Barry: When a bill comes in, they request funds. We'll look at the amount they asked for, and a number of factors including the amounts in our budget. We then make an educated decision on how much we can allocate with our budget. The job of the finance committee is to work with us to determine the correct amount. When they bring that to the body, that is their recommendation. They feel that it is worthy of funds and will benefit students. It's a large data rich process.

Senator Ducharme: When we were doing our chemistry course evaluations, my professor mentioned the efforts that SGA has done to make a standardized course evaluation and to get them published. They did a trial run today. It was the most direct response that I've ever gotten regarding SGA. It was awesome. Know that you're being heard.

Senator Lott: The Friday before I left, my Latin teacher was complaining that SGA should shorten the Thanksgiving break.

Chair Asher: Each time we bring a bill up, we don't think of it as taking something away from another club.

Yield floor to Treasurer Barry

Treasurer Barry: One of the worst things we can do is to have money left over. Students pay an SGA fee of \$87/semester. That money is designed to go to the students. We're not losing that money. There's always money left over because we plan there to be. We ask 150 organizations every year to take a 10 page long budget sheet to spend days reviewing. SGA is no exception. We spend months controlling \$2.6 million. We have a fiduciary responsibility to the students. I was really disappointed in a lot of the questions asked to the clubs today. We shouldn't make students feel uncomfortable.

Chair Bowen: At the start of this year, we reclaimed \$400,000 of unspent money from last year. It's easier to pass bills that have gone through the finance committee's hard work and will be put to good use, rather than to reclaim it at the end of the year. It's our duty to give them that money.

Chair Pope-McGraw: I agree that we need to make people feel comfortable, but I don't think you should hesitate to ask questions if you feel it necessary.

Senator Lott: I resist the idea that just because we have money means we need to allocate it.

Yield floor to Treasurer Barry.

Treasurer Barry: I think it's important to acknowledge that what's important to you and what's important to me can be different. We're not saying that we have to spend every dollar. The \$87 is not designed to be saved. We are here to promote and enhance the student experience. Our goal is to give that money out.

Senator Lott: Is it within SGA to determine the SGA semester fee?

Yield floor to Treasurer Barry.

Treasurer Barry: Yes. We actually raised it last year. We have 150 organizations and we're increasing. We have to replace a couple of our vans in our fleet. We can reduce the fee, but reducing the fee would mean we're not able to support as many organizations. We want to have more students feel comfortable about joining some of these organizations.



Speaker Conlon: You usually get the bills before they come to senate. You can utilize resources around you, Chair Kaufman, Chair Asher, or Treasurer Barry, to learn about them before senate. As Chair Pope-McGraw said, if you have a question that you feel is necessary for the floor, don't hesitate to ask it.

Senator Madowitz: I respect everyone here. Executives are executives because they know what they're talking about, so we should respect them.

## **SENATORIAL COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Senator Lee: Thank you for being patient with me. I heard a lot of bad things about SGA coming in to this, but I don't see it. I've never felt uncomfortable here. I really enjoy it.

Thank you all.

Senator Lott: I'm doing stand up comedy at Half Lounge this Thursday at 9:15. You should all come.

President Daley: Tomorrow in the Grand Maple Ballroom 9-3 Staff Council Holiday Bazaar. There are a lot of cool items you can get for Christmas. Thursday at 9:15 I'll be at Half Lounge watching Senator Lott. Please join me.

Senator Madowitz: I know I said that I would have pasta today, but I had to finish 40% of my grade and I left the food on Williams steps. I hope it's still there but it's probably not. I promise that I will bring lots of food after break.

Chair Pope-McGraw: You shouldn't be sorry because your grade was on the line. It's not your duty to provide us with food.

## **FINAL ROLL CALL**

SAC: All Present

SA: Senator Falques excused

CODEE: Senators Martinez, Cares excused

Finance: Senator DaGama excused

AA: All Present

PR: All Present

COLA: All Present

**ADJOURNMENT:** 8:24 PM, recorder (1:24:45)