



Finance & Budget Committee

2019-2020 Meeting Minutes

Friday, January 24, 2020, 11:30am
HUB 314: GPSS Board Table

PRESENT:

Shane Schrader – Treasurer; Committee Chair
Danielle Brown, GPSS Senator; Committee Vice Chair
Terrence Pope, GPSS Senator
Julia Overfelt, GPSS Senator
Ted Cohen, GPSS Senator
A.J. Balatico, GPSS Senator

NOT PRESENT:

Becky Tran - Budget Specialist, Staff
Jared Canright, GPSS Senator
Simon Crean, GPSS Senator

Shane calls the Meeting to order at 11:35am.

OVERVIEW

Becky gives each member an agenda, copies of last week's meeting minutes, Departmental Allocations Presentation: Earth & Space Sciences' Graduate Retreat Weekend, and Special Allocations Applications: African Student Association's Afro-Caribbean Night, and Japanese Student Association's Matsuri 2020.

1. Call to Order
 - a. Approval of Agenda

Ted moves to approve the agenda. *AJ* seconds. No objections. Motion passes.

- b. Approval of the Minutes

Ted points out that since the committee fell into quorum and did not receive quorum until after the committee heard the first two presentations, that the minutes should be rearranged chronologically to reflect this.

Danielle moves to approve last week's minutes with the previously mentioned amendment. *Julia* seconds. No objections. Motion passes.

2. Departmental Allocations Presentation: Earth & Space Sciences - ESS Graduate Retreat Weekend

Presentation

Requesting funds from GPSS to offset the cost of lodging for the Earth & Space Sciences' Graduate Retreat at Friday Harbor Labs. This is an annual event. This year, it will take place February 7-9. They have 41 attendees who have already RSVP'ed. During the weekend, they hold their quarterly graduate student meeting, foster department culture.

Questions and Answers

Shane asks if the department has used this to market the program to new students?
Presenter answers that this is something they mention during their Potential Student Weekends. It's not an active marketing effort, but it is brought up to give prospective students a preview into the department.

Danielle asks if there are any other fees associated with the student costs.
Presenter explains students will have to pay some amount of money. Factoring GPSS funds, each student would have to pay about \$50.

Danielle reclarifies the portion of students who are attending to the total grad population.
Presenter explains their department has a total of 90 graduate students and so far, 41 have confirmed their attendance.

Ted asks if ESS Retreat has received any funds from their department.
Presenter answers: not yet, but they have requested \$1,250 from their department.

Ted follows up if ESS Retreat has received funding from them in the past and if so, about how much funding have they usually granted in the past?
Presenter says they received \$800 from their department but also mentioned that last year was an unusual case because their original retreat dates were canceled due to the snow.

Julia asks who are the planners behind this event?
Presenter answers the planning board are entirely students who comprise the committee.

Julia follows up with a question about their agenda - how is the agenda determined?
Presenter says that the agenda items are up to the committee to decide; a good portion of the agenda is based on past years.

Discussion

Ted's calculations show that if GPSS fully funded, each student would save \$15-\$20.

Danielle feels comfortable fully funding because it's entirely a graduate student event, and half of the department's population is committed to attending.

Shane says that the things he's looking for in these retreat requests is: if they're giving feedback back to the department, if it's student led. And they said yes to both.

Danielle makes a motion to fully fund at \$750. *Julia* seconds. No objections.

VOTE: ALL vote YES. None OPPOSED. None abstained.

3. Special Allocations Presentation: African Student Association - Afro-Caribbean Night

Presentation

Afro-Caribbean Night is one of the biggest events at all of UW. It is a cultural showcase of different countries in Africa and the diaspora. There will be dances, a fashion show, . They attract a wide variety of audience from performers', students both undergraduates and graduate students, faculty, and community members. Their expenses have drastically increased this year due to increased Kane Hall costs and equipment costs. This event is their only fundraiser where they raise funds for the rest of the year; anything extra that they collect from his event, they keep and use it for the next year. Thus, it might be hard to even break even this year due to high expenses.

Questions and Answers

Danielle asks how large the event has been and what they expect the turnout to be.

Presenter shares that in the past, they have had about 700 seats at the event, but this year, they're getting rid of the balcony which will deduct the max capacity to around 500.

Danielle follows up by asking how they know how many graduate students attend?

Presenter says they have different mechanisms to track attendance. They interact with graduate students during the event, some approach the organization after the event, and some are performers. Thus, they don't have specific numbers, they have a rough proportion estimate. However, they would be willing to collect that information this year.

AJ asks if they're already started selling their advanced sales tickets.

Presenter answers that they have not started yet, they plan on doing so in February.

AJ wants to know, historically, what's the breakdown of presale tickets versus week of.

Presenter says about 25% are presale tickets, and the majority is week of ticket purchases.

Danielle asks if any graduate students are on the planning committee.

Presenter says they are starting a volunteer committee that will also help with the planning of the event and they plan to attract graduate students.

Julia asks how they plan on attracting graduate students (are they partnering with any graduate RSO, or know which students may already be interested)?

Presenter answers they have students who were part of the board before and are graduate students now that they keep in contact with.

Ted mentions that GPSS's funding cap is \$750 and asks them to explain what the difference between out \$750 cap versus their requested \$3,000.

Presenter explains that they put down \$3,000 because that's how much Kane Hall costs. And a lot of their known funding opportunities have been scrapped from last year. So, they're looking to make ends meet.

Danielle asks if they do not get all the funding, would they cancel the event? If not, how would they make sure the event still happens?

Presenter says that if they do not get all their requested funds, they would cut down on expenses like HUB room rentals for rehearsal, getting a head count to make sure which countries will represent, and cutting down on any unnecessary equipment.

Discussion

Ted thinks this is a primarily undergraduate event run by an undergraduate RSO. While it is a cultural event, it is not geared towards graduate students. However, he understands their budget frustration with room rentals. *Ted* asks if we know how much those room rates have increased year to year - because he thinks it's increased by 30% in one year, and then another 30% the following year.

Shane mentions that while the presenters did not mention this, he knows this event reaches out to youths and engaged the community. And it's their premiere event.

Danielle notices that it is their one event and she is aware that the African population is low, in terms of diversity, cultural aspects.

Shane says that last year we funded \$550.

Ted says due to how much room rentals have increased, and how GPSS F&B has already increased their budget - he's comfortable funding around \$650.

Danielle says based on how we have been funding and supporting diversity, she would also be comfortable funding them at \$650.

Ted makes a motion to fund at \$650. *Danielle* seconds. No objections.

VOTE: ALL vote YES. None OPPOSED. None abstained.

4. Special Allocations Presentation: Japanese Student Association - Matsuri 2020

Presentation

This is their biggest event of the year. Matsuri means *festival* in Japanese. This is an annual event that they have hosted for over a decade. They showcase the diversity of Japanese culture with food, games, and performances. While food and games cost money to partake, the overall event is free and the performances are also free. This event is open to everyone



from students to faculty, children to parents - they really see a diverse group of people every year at learn and increase their interest in the Japanese culture. Looking back at their previous years, it has predominantly been an undergraduate event. However, this year, they plan on expanding their graduate participation by tapping into their JSA graduate student population, FIUTS, and students in the Asian Languages Department. They are also looking for volunteers and expect graduate students to get involved. GPSS funds would go towards kitchen food prep and honorarium fees. This year, they're inviting a Japanese string instrument / Japanese artist from Japan to perform.

Questions and Answers

Danielle asks for further clarification about their kitchen prep - does this cover food funds? Shane answers no, it's for room rental fees.

Danielle notices that the total amount of funds they have requested is \$8,000 and their budget is \$18,000 - how are they making up that difference?

Presenter explains that they make funds through a myriad of different ways. For example, they installed cushioned seats for Dawg Pack ticket holders, participate in research that compensates them, and host various events throughout the year, volunteers at events where they make connections with individuals who in turn want to sponsor the RSO.

Ted asks who the performer is.

Presenter says their performer is a Japanese string instrument performer, whose brother went to UW which is why she's interested in coming.

Ted asks if the artist is going to perform anywhere else in Seattle while she's in town because GPSS rules are that if any of our funds go to support a speaker/artist's honorarium, they cannot perform anywhere else in the city.

Presenter says no, she will only be performing at UW for this event.

Terrence asks how they think ticket sales will factor into their budget.

Presenter says usually the ticket sales just allow them to break even.

Shane asks if they have grad students on the board that help plan the event.

Presenter explains that last year's treasurer is now a graduate student at UW and she has helped out with this year's planning quite a bit.

Ted asks for a ballpark figure of how many graduate students attended last year.

Presenter says since don't charge a door fee, they don't keep demographics of attendees. They only demographic data they get are from presales. About 10% from presale tickets were graduate students.

Discussion

Ted thinks if we fund this RSO, we would need to put in our email to them about the 15% funding profit returns back to GPSS.

Shane says he liked how they had line items for all their expenses, knew what each funding grant would go towards, and their approach to reaching out to graduate students (FIUTS and Languages).

Julia says she really likes free cultural events.

Shane says he also likes how they've put in a lot of effort to procure their own funds as well. It's not like they're coming in with no plans on how to make funds, or spend them.

Julia says she's comfortable fully funding.

Ted mentions that they seem to have more money available than a lot of other groups that we hear from, that he would be more comfortable funding at a \$600-\$650 level.

Shane reminds the group we can also fund a line item.

Ted doesn't entirely feel comfortable funding a person's international travel, versus choosing to go with a domestic artist.

Julia motions to fund at \$650. *Ted* seconds. No objections.

VOTE: ALL vote YES. None OPPOSED. None abstains.

5. Announcements

Shane asks for someone to attend the SAF (HUB 303, Friday at 1:00pm) meeting next week in his absence.

Shane also presents the committee with two GPSS internal General Funds Request for the committee's understanding. The first sheet is a request for additional funds for GPSS's Grad Day on the Hill event. Previously, GPSS partnered with ASUW's Huskies on the Hill event where ASUW covered a good chunk of the finances. This is the first year that GPSS is independently running out own event, and these additional funds will cover transportation to Olympia. These funds will be coming out of the general fund but also from the excess, unused funds from last academic year's budget (which means we won't be spending at a deficit from this year's budget).

The second general funds withdraw request is for a new computer for the creative director position. Over summer, we tried to get STF funding for a new computer for our creative director. The current computer that we have for the position hasn't been able to run anything for the last few years; meaning that the past few creative directors have had to use their own personal equipment. This creates an equity issue for those who are interested in the position but do not have their own laptops/computers, and so they would not be able to do their job.

Due to communication issues, we were not able to submit a funding request to STF over the summer and if we were to submit one now, it would not get approved (if it gets approved)

until the end of this quarter and therefore we would not have our new computer until April/May. For the past few years, we had a budget line dedicated to procuring new equipment that we have not touched in three years (so once again, we would be using excess funds from previous years, not spending at a deficit from this year's budget).

Ted feels that these General Fund Requests should go through F&B because they're such large events. Even through our Departmental and Special Allocations, it takes a lot for the committee to spend \$5,000. And while he understands that these amounts are going to be taken out from previous years' surpluses - but this really could have been funded by STF.

Shane shares that there has been talk about replacing most if not all of GPSS's computers in the next two years. So, he's been telling the group to start prepping for that STF request. He thinks it's a good idea to push General Fund requests through F&B as well as Exec.

Ted offers to draft this change to Senate! As well as proposing a bylaw amendment to raise our funding cap from \$750 to \$1,000.

Shane also mentions that he plans to work with F&B and propose another bylaw line to transfer 15% of our excess General Funds to our endowment.

6. Adjourn

Ted moves to adjourn the meeting . *Danielle* seconds. No objections.

The Meeting was adjourned at 12:31pm.