



Finance & Budget Committee

2018-2019 Meeting Minutes

Friday, March 8, 2019, 11:30
HUB 314: GPSS Board Table

PRESENT:

Robby Perkins-High – Treasurer; Committee Chair, Evans School
Jasmine Chan - Budget Specialist, Staff
Ted Cohen, GPSS Senator
Giuliana Conti, President; Proxy for Varun Kao
Zhiyun Ma, GPSS Senator
Alex Thompson, GPSS Senator
Shane Schrader, GPSS Senator

NOT PRESENT:

Varun Kao, GPSS Senator

Robby called the Meeting to order at 11:31AM.

OVERVIEW

Jasmine ensures that each Committee member has the packet of meeting materials including the agenda, Special Allocations application packets, meeting minutes, and budget.

1. Approval of Agenda

Ted moves to approve the agenda. *Zhiyun* seconds. No objections. Agenda is approved.

Jasmine and *Robby* recuse themselves from the first Special Allocations presentation, as the RSO is from the Evans School.

Robby cedes the chairship to *Ted*.

2. Special Allocations Presentation: Partnership for Community and Diversity, Voices and Visions Awards Breakfast

Presentation

This year will mark the 3rd annual Voices and Visions Awards Breakfast. Partnership for Community and Diversity has received GPSS funding in prior years. The Breakfast is organized by Evans students for the community to highlight people of color and women of color in the Seattle community. Advertising at the Evans School and within the community. Faculty also attend the event. Two years ago, the keynote speaker was Nikkita Oliver. Last year, the keynote speaker was Ijeoma Oluo. The keynote speaker is an individual who is significant to the Seattle community. This is a catered breakfast and is hosted at the



Intellectual House. The goal is to hear from our community and people working in racial and social justice.

Giuliana inquires about why the event is being held at the Intellectual House. *Presenter* responds that PCD acknowledges that we are on Duwamish land and that the Intellectual House is a space on campus dedicated to the Duwamish people. This venue is a symbolic choice for this event in particular.

Giuliana asks if PCD has applied for other sources of funding than listed on the application. *Presenter* states that everything listed were applied to, but that organizers were late to apply to GPSS Diversity Fund.

Ted seeks a status update regarding outstanding funding requests. *Presenter* mentions that the only absolutes known is that the four funding sources listed at the bottom of the budgeting sheet are all solidified (Evans Student Organization, Partnership for Community and Diversity, Evans Network of Women, and Evans People of Color). *Presenter* is willing to follow-up with the Committee with updates.

Zhiyun requests additional information regarding attendance and advertising. *Presenter* states that advertising is pushed through the Evans School and LinkedIn. Currently, the advertising is low because there is a related event tomorrow (3/9/2019) that is currently being promoted heavily. After this event, organizers plan to send email blasts to alumni email lists, posters in Social Work, Public Health, and other departments interested in people of color and women of color in public service.

Giuliana inquires about the timeline for the speaker finalization. *Presenter* responds that organizers are actively working on securing a keynote speaker and that the goal is to have a speakers secured ideally in the next week or two.

Ted asks if there are contingency plans if GPSS does not fund the event in full. *Presenter* states that there will be \$1,200 in ticket revenues which puts the event at a net profit. They also ask for donations on top of the ticket price to help fund the Breakfast and additional events like the event tomorrow (3/9/2019).

Ted inquires about what event profits will fund. *Presenter* states that profits will go to a summit event primarily geared to Evans students, but is open and advertised among other departments.

Discussion

Robby provides information: the next presenters will arrive in five minutes. Last year, the Committee funded the event at \$500, the maximum of requested funding. The Special Allocations Fund has just under \$6,000 left and 12 scheduled applications. Currently, the total number of applications has been 32, and last year the Committee received a total of 34 applications.

Alex comments that this is not a very high cost event and that they have received a lot of their requested amount.



Zhiyun clarifies whether the group has the last four funding sources solidified, to total \$700. *Ted* confirms that the last four funding sources are solidified.

Ted notes that based on the Presenter's account, the GPSS Diversity Grant is not going to happen because of a missed application deadline. This means \$500 is off the table. However, even without this funding source, PCD still has enough funding for the event.

Ted comments that PCD did check the 15% return box off on the form and that the Committee can think about whether or not to keep that in place.

Ted states he is interested in lowering the return amount because the proceeds go to another event that helps graduate students without funding in full.

Alex expresses the same concern as *Giuliana* regarding the keynote speaker.

Giuliana states that there are two sides to this. PCD has been mindful about certain aspects of the event, including the choice of the Intellectual House as the venue for the Breakfast. This is the kind of event GPSS wants to fund. However, it is concerning that the main speaker, who is in some sense the event itself, is not yet determined. It is difficult to find someone who is femme, local, and meaningful, but that there is potentially a pool of individuals to pick from.

Robby states that the Committee can fund the event conditional on the speaker, as there are funding restrictions here.

Giuliana expresses that promoting events like this can build momentum that will sustain these events that are important for graduate students to experience and have access to.

Ted notes that the event is almost entirely attended and organized by graduate students.

Zhiyun likes their outreach and publicity methods. Using LinkedIn makes advertising more useful for reaching graduate students.

Zhiyun moves to fund at \$300 with a 5% return.

No second.

Zhiyun withdraws the motion.

Giuliana moves to fund at \$500 with a 15% return. *Alex* seconds.

Zhiyun states that her initial motion was proposed because PCD has solid funding secured, but to provide funding at a lower rate with a lower return so that GPSS can support the event and the following event.



Giuliana states that she is not convinced that funding is secured. From now until then, if PCD gains sufficient funding from other sources, then their net profits will be higher and will be able to give us back some of it. It is an investment in the end, but if they don't get other funding sources, they will still be able to host their event.

Ted inquires about where the 15% return goes and whether it is directed into the Special Allocations Fund for spending this academic year. *Robby* states that this depends entirely on timing.

VOTE: Shane, Zhiyun, and Giuliana vote YES. Ted, Robby, and Jasmine abstain.

Ted cedes the chairship to *Robby*.

3. Special Allocations Presentation: Indonesian Student Association of UW, Keraton

Presentation

The event is an Indonesian festival called Keraton. The RSO promotes Indonesian culture among Indonesians and wider community. Keraton has food, performances, and games in celebration. It is the largest festival on the West Coast and the second largest in the US. The event has been held at UW since 2011. Keraton will be held on May 4th on Rainier Vista this year.

Ted inquires who the guest star will be this year. *Presenter* states that they are still deciding.

Robby seeks clarification on the funding sources for the very expensive event and only a \$6,000 funding request listed on the budget sheet. *Presenter* states they are seeking external sources, ASUW, and other sponsors.

Ted asks if ISAUW has heard from Wells Fargo and ASUW. *Presenter* responds that they did not receive funding from Wells Fargo but ASUW awarded them \$1,500.

Zhiyun comments that the expected attendance is predominantly undergraduate students and inquires about their efforts to promote to the graduate student population. *Presenter* states that they are marketing in common campus areas.

Ted states that most graduate students stay in their departments and inquires if there are other means for gaining graduate student interest. *Presenter* responds that they will put posters in department buildings as well.

Robby inquires what GPSS funds would be used for. *Presenter* states the funds would be used for staging and sound.

Discussion

Ted asks if the Committee has funded this event before. *Robby* states that last year they requested \$750 and were awarded \$400. *Alex* comments that this is likely why they requested \$400.



Ted comments that ISAUW is not making an effort to reach out to graduate students.

Zhiyun agrees. This is a good cultural event with the promotion, connection, and support for the Indonesian community, but the outreach and promotion efforts for graduate students is minimal to zero.

Robby echoes the comments on the lack of focus on graduate student involvement and adds that the answer to event funding discrepancies was insufficient. It seems like funding for the event will come through regardless of GPSS funding. *Robby* expresses that he would be uncomfortable funding this event without knowing where the \$30,000 differential is being filled by.

Ted wonders if it is worth not funding the event, as we probably will not have problems burning through our money without funding this.

Robby states that the Committee can either not fund or table the vote until next week so we can get more information about their funding sources.

Ted is in favor of not funding.

Ted moves to fund at \$0. *Zhiyun* seconds.

VOTE: *Ted, Zhiyun, and Robby* vote YES. *Shane, Alex, and Jasmine* abstain.

4. Approval of the Minutes

Ted moves to approve the minutes as amended with cosmetic and clarifying changes.

Alex seconds.

5. Budget Talk

Robby informs the Committee that there are about 33 minutes to approve a budget. This is the budget that gets presented to Senate and that there can be changes made to the budget after this point. Any differences between the Finance & Budget Committee and Executive Committee approved budgets will be presented before Senate for discussion.

Robby the first presentation of budgets at the Senate meeting on 3/6 was open for questions, not debate.

Shane states his surprise that no one commented on the change to the Days on the Hill budget line.

Robby continues budget review at Staffing. Officer's salaries have been updated to reflect what was actually paid over the last two years. Tuition waiver proposed to go up to \$100,825. It is difficult to provide a budget line for the tuition waiver. If the graduate

student tuitions are averaged, then the yearly amount should be slightly higher than the proposed amount. The only high values will be for dental or medical students serving as Officers. However, funding for cases where tuition waiver exceeds budgeted amount, there are years of excess funds in the General Fund resulting from the overbudgeting of the tuition waiver budget line.

Robby continues and talks through summer staffing. The current amount is funding part-time work. The initial proposal was for 20 hours of work per week. The Executive Committee bumps this amount up to 30 hours per week to match what is made in the school year. The discussion here is living wage versus very low weekly work requirement to allow for people to seek other employment.

Shane recalls his point from 3/1 about summer internships and inquires if the number of summer hours can be addressed on a case-by-case basis by the Executive Committee, particularly if the Officer needs to have the internship.

Robby recommends budgeting for the maximum value, then if there is an Executive Committee policy with make-up hours, then there is opportunity to move the funding in the budget line to another line in the personnel budget during the year or roll over the funding into the next year.

Ted comments that with the increase of summer hours, the budget is still only at a 2% change. *Robby* states that the Committee is looking at the 20 hours per week budget. *Robby* shows that increasing summer hours to 30 hours per week bumps the personnel budget up by 54%. *Ted* notes this is a \$12,000 increase over what the Committee has.

Ted requests that the Committee talks through the rest of the staffing decisions, as that amount is increasing a lot as well.

Robby continues into the discussion of staff schedule. Office staff hours were reallocated so that weekly hours worked are more standardized. This budget includes two weeks of training for the Staff and a stipend for Executive Senators. Executive Senators at other institutions receive a stipend. There are two potential methods to pay Executive Senators: pay during Thanksgiving, Winter Break, and Spring Break; or allocate a travel grant to each Executive Senators to be used on an academic or professional development related conference by moving the same amount into Travel Grant fund earmarked for Executive Senators.

Ted favors payment during breaks. *Zhiyun* agrees.

Robby notes that the addition of a stipend for Executive Senators changes the nature of the position, as it currently is a volunteer role.

Shane wonders if all Executive Senators would be able to benefit from having a travel grant earmarked for them, as not all graduate departments have conferences. *Robby* confirms that this is correct, that there is no guarantee that all Executive Senators would benefit.



Robby states that the Executive Senator stipend and two week staff training increases the personnel budget by \$12,000.

Ted seeks clarification on the staff scheduling spreadsheet. *Robby* states that the top of the sheet is the position name, white cells are valid for this year, blue cells are the FY20 proposed work hours, below is the rate. This schedule has staff working full hours each week, excluding 1 week for Thanksgiving, 3 weeks for Winter Break, and 1 week for Spring Break. If staff training is reduced to 1 week, \$2,000 are freed.

Ted states that considering that the training week did not happen last year, he is in favor of cutting a training week. He recommends starting with a cheaper option, then decide if a full two week training duration is necessary.

Robby notes that if 1 week of training is funded, Officers can choose to have staff work two half-time weeks.

Zhiyun inquires about Jasmine's training experience. *Jasmine* responds that she was present only for the last two hours of training and these hours were spent with *Robby* getting up to speed. *Robby* adds that he and Jasmine have worked together before, so not as much time was required to get started on work.

Robby states that there was a lot of learning on the go. This is easier for some staff positions than others.

Robby continues by stating that the benefits loading budget line pays for healthcare, social security, and medicare taxes.

Shane states that this also seems to include an amount for insurance and inquires if this is required. *Robby* states that we have no control over this. The benefit load rate is given to GPSS.

Ted inquires about the Officers' perspective on the hours over the year. *Robby* states that all Officers want their staff to have more hours. The total weekly hours for all staff amounts to a 1.5 hour increase over FY19.

Ted asks why the FY20 budget increases the Clerk budget from 7 to 10 when they are using fewer hours than budgeted. *Robby* states that this year's Senate Clerk is a very experienced and efficient note-taker.

Ted expresses concern that increasing Clerk hours is contributing to the habit of over-budgeting. *Robby* states that to move forward, the Committee can propose cutting the combined number of hours and that he can distribute that cut.

Ted states that as long as the SAF request is the same, then it is fine to cover the difference with General Fund dollars, and if it isn't spent during FY20, then the money just goes back into the General Fund.



Shane prefers not to cut down from FY19 to FY20 in the case that next year's Clerk is less efficient or does get to their hours.

Shane favors a flatter schedule for Office Staff.

Robby continues to the Departmental Allocations Budget. The original proposal was decreased by \$2,000 to a total of \$3,000 for FY20. Executive committee bumped this amount back to \$5,000. This Committee also is in favor of \$5,000.

Robby continues: Special Allocations Budget increased by \$3,000 and could probably increase this more.

Alex comments that it would be good to know how much the Committee has to work with for Special Allocations awards and that if the full budget line has a huge sum, then there would be reason to increase the maximum amount RSOs can apply for.

Robby states that no group has been funded above \$750 this year.

Ted favors raising an additional \$1,000 to \$2,000.

Shane supports a \$5,000 total increase.

Zhiyun inquires if this means that the application cap will increase as well. *Robby* states this is up to the Executive Committee.

Committee agrees to increase Special Allocations Budget to \$22,000.

Robby continues: Travel Grants Committee is currently only funding attendance at academic conferences where applicants are presenting. GPSS is meant to be a last resort. The Committee believes they can fund about 10 more students as there is high demand.

Robby states that we should not increase our SAF funding request.

Robby states that the programming budget will be at \$15,000 at the end of the year and recommends not spending this down, as funding from the Provost is not yet known. GPSS currently gets about \$5,000 per year in Endowment distributions that has not been spent in five years, since its inception. The recommendation here is to spend this down.

Ted states that with the changes from the Committee, the General Fund withdrawal is \$21,000, a sizable increase. *Robby* states that originally, the General Fund was ta \$19,000.

Ted states that this can be sent to Senate. The increases are coming from staffing, and as long as GPSS is not increasing the SAF request, there is nothing to lose for over-budgeting.

Robby states that this is a reasonable amount of money to spend next year, otherwise we could hurt future years.



Ted wants the future GPSS to keep good track of how many hours people work. *Robby* states that we are currently tracking this closely. *Ted* requests this year and next year, so that Committee members can know exactly how much was spent.

Robby states that after this budget passes Committee, he will be working over Spring Break to get as many actuals as possible.

Ted reiterates that as long as the SAF request does not increase, he is okay with approving the budget.

Alex inquires if the large increase in budget lines will show up to Senate. *Robby* clarifies that any differing numbers between the Executive Committee and Finance & Budget Committee budget proposals will be called out. In addition, Senators themselves can bring up differences for discussion.

Alex clarifies that he is referring specifically to the increase in Special Allocations.

Shane states that the Committee has a good window into actual requests and a good eye on requested need. The Committee has a better idea than Executive Committee or Senate has for why this line needs to be increased.

Robby inquires if there is an amount of the Distribution the Committee wants to spend down. *Ted* is in favor of spending more. Even when it is spent down, GPSS will get \$12,000 each year. Zero the Distributions line!

Shane reiterates that there is no guarantee of what the Provost will do in terms of funding.

Ted encourages *Robby* to set the Distribution fund line to the maximum: \$24,000.

Shane inquires for the reason for zeroing out the Distribution. *Ted* states that GPSS does not need two nest eggs, just one (General Fund).

Robby states that unused Distributions are transferred to the General Fund, but it is generally good to spend this down to show people that GPSS is using the Distributions.

Ted reiterates \$24,000.

Robby states he will put in \$20,000 since \$24,000 is the projected Distribution total after FY19.

Ted inquires if this means there will be \$15,000 transferred from the General Fund. This means that GPSS will cut the SAF request, which is good because we are over-budgeting and we should give up some of the money we have accumulated.

Shane makes a neutral point that if GPSS makes a lower SAF request, then that will set a new standard that GPSS might not be able to pull back from. *Robby* states that this is part of a larger discussion than can be had in this Committee.



Ted moves to vote on the budget as is, with the SAF cut request. *Zhiyun* seconds.

VOTE: Ted, Shane, Zhiyun, and Alex vote YES. Robby and Jasmine abstain.

6. Departmental Allocations Presentation: School of Nursing Doctoral Program Retreat

Presentation

The doctoral program is not large, but is significant in the School of Nursing. There is a heavy focus on the research and a lot of students come in potentially without a direct mentor for their research. A key mechanism for supporting students is to create an opportunity for engagement to talk through their experiences and to engage with faculty. Incoming students have a paired mentor that may not have matched interests. Organizers are trying to continue the SON PhD Retreat to get PhD students off campus to get to know each other better with peer-to-peer mentors and faculty open to engaging and mentoring students. Started three years ago: the first two years run by spearheading students; the third year (last year), the organization moved to two new individuals in the Spring and the event was missed. This year, the event is going to happen.

Ted inquires if they have surveyed students about the event and if Presenters know how many people will be attending. *Presenter* states that they conducted a pre-survey to gather information on faculty availability and gauge student interest. There is consistent interest.

Robby inquires how this retreat will be made accessible for as many people as possible. *Presenter* states that the target is for 20 people, including 3 faculty members. The Dean is offering their home for the faculty to stay. For the students, there will be organizing of vehicles and ferry passes will be provided to offset cost. The location is close to downtown.

Ted states that there are about 14 students attending. *Presenter* confirms this. For the two years the event took place, there were around 14 students each time. A lot of students have families and cannot necessarily go away for the weekend. There were 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 5th years last time, and there is hope that this year will have the same spread. To ensure that the retreat is directly beneficial for students, this year there is intentionality to make the event structured for individuals to discuss collaborating with faculty and each other, and to give space for reflection.

Presenter follows up and says that the 1st years are a close group, but there are a few with kids and not all of them will attend the retreat.

Discussion

Robby states the Departmental Allocations funding policies that each department is allowed up to \$750 per academic year, or \$15 per person in the program. Retreats must be held on state property, which is why everyone goes to Friday Harbor Labs.



Ted inquires if the \$15 per person guideline is for the total number in the program rather than the number of people attending. *Robby* states that this is up to the Committee's discretion, but this amount is per our guidelines that state \$15 per person in the program.

Ted states that the Presenters should have done the survey of attendees before coming to GPSS. *Alex* agrees that it is always good to know how many people are going.

Shane mentions that the organizers did conduct a pre-survey, but that there potentially could have been something with more commitment.

Ted expresses that he would have liked to see the results of the pre-survey and states that the Committee could table the funding request and ask for the provision of survey results. Or the Committee could just fund the retreat.

Ted states that the Committee has funded the retreat every year it has been held.

Shane states that Presenters are making the retreat more structured with it being more academic-leaning and directed for the students that are coming.

Robby states that the housing cost is \$700 and the other \$50 is for the ferry passes.

Alex moves to fund at \$750. *Zhiyun* seconds.

VOTE: Alex, Zhiyun, Ted, Robby, and Shane vote YES. Jasmine abstains.

Shane moves to adjourn the meeting. *Alex* seconds.

The Meeting was adjourned at 12:53PM.