

GPSS Executive Committee Meeting- 15 April 2015

Meeting called to order at 5:35 p.m. by meeting chair Alice Popejoy

Members Present:

GPSS President Alice Popejoy
GPSS Vice President Alex Bolton
GPSS Secretary Natalie Gordon
ASUW Representative Amber Amin
Executive Senator Elloise Kim
Executive Senator Yasmeen Hussain
Executive Senator Eddie Schwieterman
GPSS Senator Monica Cortes-Viharo
Alli Germaine (UAW 4121)
Kristin Garofali (UAW 4121)

Approval of Agenda

Alex: Motion to amend the agenda to add item on WSA for 15 minutes after item 7.

Eddie: Second

Natalie moved to approve the agenda, Elloise seconded.

Agenda for the meeting approved with amended item.

Approval of Minutes

Natalie moved to approve the minutes, Elloise seconded.

Minutes approved without modification.

Minimum Wage Update

Alice: When President Young was at the school, he was the one who was leading the conversation regarding minimum wage. When he left, no one picked up the topic. We are currently waiting on the verdict on what we were supposed to be doing. That said, I think we could do better. We as in student groups and administrators. There was an article in the Seattle Times regarding minimum wage and it singled out the University by saying UW wasn't responding to the laws. We are ready to make minimum wage to go to \$11/hr, but there are also student funded organizations with student employees.

Yasmeen: This is where we were at the last exec meeting.

Alice: We support wage increases in theory, we would love to have all students paid \$15/hr, but we need to look at the financial situation. After some intensive meetings, SAF said that since April 1st, we can increase wages to \$11, but we need to come up with creative ways fund this and make this sustainable. We don't want the University to fund us, because we would lose the autonomy. There are couple units that can be funded by the University, and we are still exploring the options and practical ways that the University should help navigate this. However, the University budget is very tight currently. The interim President has already put in a lot of effort in cutting down unnecessary spending within the administrative units first, and they will do it with academic units later. They are actively seeking a solution on where they can cut their spending currently. Knowing the obstacles, it's not reasonable to ask for that amount of money

to support the increase. Prospects do look good overall from the conversations I have been having.

Elloise: Faculty Senate is trying to write resolution in solidarity with GPSS.

Eddie: Philosophically, we are for... but we do not have an official response yet.

Alice: Elloise, you should remain the primary contact to the council, and as soon as we have an official response, you can let them know. But right now we can't pay everyone \$15/hr because it would literally bankrupt all student funded units including GPSS, ASUW, and Hall Health.

Eddie: My concern is the presentation of joint responsibility with the University to figure it out. I don't want to create the image that we are the obstacle to increasing wages.

Alice: Budgets is a zero-sum game, the obstacle is the budget itself.

Yasmeen: Overtime. | Alex: Move to extend for 5 minutes | Elloise: Seconded

Eddie: We will present the minimum wage resolution on May 6, so we will have a position before the faculty council meeting and you will be able to present it to them.

Alice: If legislators don't give money to the University branch in Spokane, the center will be shut down because we don't have the money.

Amber: You can only raise SAF fees in proportion to tuition raises, but is it state legislature or SAF's rules (Alice: State legislature)

Alice: In conclusion, philosophically we support it, but we are still figuring out how to implement it in the long run and how to create sustainability without eliminating jobs.

Student Workers - UAW

Kristin: Communication is essential and we are glad that we are here. We want to clear up some misunderstandings- we are all on the same page, there were no feelings of animosity.

Alli: The University brought the note to you guys and said "give us the go-ahead" and we totally understand that it is not a reasonable request. We want to make sure that you know there is not weird feelings, and we completely understand.

Alli: Quick bargaining update: The bargaining process is sitting down with people from labor relations, and people from other University administrators and spelling out our rights as student employees, and it's basically our right to certain things, wages, fees, etc. We bargain over a new contract every three years.

Kristin: we send our surveys before presenting our proposal to make sure to represent all voices.

Alli: It was down the table, we pass all these proposals, they look at them, they make decisions, and bargain until we reach an agreement, the deadline being April 30th.

Alice: Are there questions? How many people are on the bargaining team?

Alli: Right now 19. We started out with 9, we passed bylaws to expand the scope of our committee, and now we have representatives from each department. Each union member is welcome to come to our meeting.

Alex: Do all 19 of you go to every meeting?

Yasmeen: There must be a quorum.

Alice: How many administrators usually go to those meetings?

Alli: Usually the same, but involvement level varies. Also different people come to different events.

Alice: When is the next meeting?

Alli: Wednesday at Condon Hall from 12:00-4:00.

Alice: Are people welcome to come to meetings, can they talk? Do meetings usually last for all 4 hours?

Alli: All people are welcome.

Alice: Do you know among the 7-10 people among the admin, do you know what their breakdown is?

Alli: It's mostly labor relations, some people from Nursing, Graduate School, College of Art & Sciences, The Benefits Office (very little).

Alice: Who usually comes from the Graduate School?

Alli: Marilyn Grey

Eddie: Could you go into detail on the important issue of wage (\$11/hr) and healthcare and fees? I have some questions on each of those.

Alli: Minimum wage, yes, we have put that into our scope from the initial bargaining in December. They responded it is out of the scope of bargaining. That's in our compensation piece.

Eddie: There are people from HR on the bargaining team, so they were aware of it.

Alli: For health care there has been big misunderstandings and confusion, where GAIP benefits were cut, whereas before 100% was covered, now only 50%. Also now the out of pocket money has been raised. We have unfair labor practices as well as grievances, but we are still bargaining. Part of the reason we started in December is to start on the health care thing. Since December 5th, today is the first day that they have passed us a proposal. The worst part is that they cut the benefit for us in October....

Alice: Where does the cap come from?

Alli: If you go over this, then benefits must be cut.

Alex: Does it have anything to do with ACA?

Alli: We looked into it, but ACA is not affecting it.

Alice: Do you know who made the decision?

Alli: The University said they don't know about this, and Life Wise is the one who made the decision. So there are a few actors here, the University (employers), the insurance companies, and the broker. The broker's commission is about 1-2%. It seems like a conflict of interest. For example the project cost is \$20 million dollars, and he makes 1% of that.

Alice: He makes commission on the total plan or the increase?

Alli: The total

Alice: Are there any other universities who don't go over brokers?

Alli: Yes you could be self-funded, but they pretty much said that they are not going to do that.

Alice: When did you guys draft an RFP?

Alli: In February, and we gave it to the bargaining team. That's who we go back and forth with. Transparency is a huge thing for us, and that's been cut from this proposal. The most recent proposal is if we go above this annual cap, they have to sit down and discuss what benefit will be cut, and if we can't decide, the University will decide what benefit to cut. The University called it a big error and confusion.. and that was today. The problem with this plan on health care is it puts all the risk on student employees, versus the idea of sharing the risks. I tried to bring that up at bargaining today, putting risks on student employees is a bit crazy considering our stipend is a big amount.

Eddie: The union goes beyond their means to help people set their insurance claims.

Alli: Two people's jobs would be to help people about insurance. And now they always tell student employees to call LifeWise and students spend hours on the phone. Our bargain is to make it more transparent to communicate with LifeWise or whoever, but our request has basically been ignored. I know that health care is not a great thing for everyone, but the University can be a leader on this thing, but they are clearly choosing not to be a leader.

Alice: If I hadn't heard anything about this, I would have thought everything was fine and we have good healthcare.

Alli: We want to continue to have really good healthcare, the problem is that we can probably lose benefits according to the University's proposal.

Alice: So in theory- the only thing I get out of my insurance is acupuncture, and if somebody gets cancer, and the whole thing blows off the budget, I can't use acupuncture.

Alli: Yes, we will have to decide. They just cut the benefit in October, they agreed that it was a mistake.

Alice: What exactly did they cut?

Kristin: There is a bit list (you can find the exhaustive list on the Union website)

Alli: People have been paying more than what they should have been paying, and the University pretty much said that the people will get their money back. But I think that's problematic, because there is interest on that money. I see it as, they have to pay money, to pay that money back because they have to pay \$12 when they write a check. The fees of SFR fee and U-Pass mandatory fee, we filed a grievance against that.

Alice: That was Student Government, the U-Pass advisory board voted to make it universal.

Eddie: The contract said that the waiver has to remain at the same level. So while at the capacity of students, we are responsible to pay those fees, but the University is responsible for waving those fees for ASEs. The arbitrator basically said that the University violated the contract. The University ignored the arbitrator and we filed again.

Alli: It seems strange to us that they could fight and fight when the arbitrator already ruled against them, and they could have used that money that was wasted.

Alice: I will entertain motion to extend time | Yasmeen: move to extend time by 10 minutes |

Eddie: Second

Alli: They wanted to raise wages and impose all these fees.

Alice: What's SFR? | Alex: The HUB

Alli: The SFR is no longer waived, the U-PASS would be made mandatory, and as long as they notify us, they can impose any fee.

Yasmeen: I am okay with SFR not being waived, but I am not okay with the part where it mentions that extra imposed fees are allowed, as long as there is notification.

Alice: So what about SAF fee or STF fee? I see a utility in giving student government flexibility to raise fees without going through the union contract negotiation.

Alli: student imposed fees haven't been in the conversation.

Alice: What's the \$400 fee I pay every quarter?

Yasmeen: The operating, building, SAF, Bond, STF, Sports Field Fee

Alli: It varies from graduate student to graduate student but the building fee is a major concern and issue.

Alice: Where did all these other fees come from?

Rene: Rebuilding the IMA and rebuilding this facility.

Alice: We are at time again, does anyone want to continue the discussion? Can I entertain the motion to extend time by 3 minutes? Alex: So move | Eddie: Second.

Alice: I would love for you to come to our meetings every week now. It is so valuable. I also think the Daily should be reporting what is going on at the Union meetings. I think the broker situation is juicy story, the next step is to talk openly with students about this issue. What things would you like help from GPSS as far as bargaining goes?

Kristin: We are looking for mobilization now.

Elloise: The vote for the Union to go on strike, how many people have signed up?

Alli: There are about 1000 people who have voted. We need more people, because it would be a huge bargaining chip. So if you can leverage your relationships and tell people what we just told you about bargaining, it would be great. People should be aware of these issues.

Monica: What is the relationship with AWDU?

Alli: They are separate from the union. They have their own particular leadership in organizing.

Kristin: There is a coalition that we both are a part of.

Alice: The next step is to raise awareness on how these things are going.

Eddie: Can you share the broker's name?

Alli: The broker's name is Kevin Norris from Parker Smith & Feek

Alice: Would you be willing to come to the meeting next week?

Alli: I cannot come but other members can come.

Alice: We have you on our agenda. Do you have any questions?

Legislative Update

Alex: For SAF, the Senate budget is silent on it. There are some concerns if tuition were to go down, what would that mean. Me and Austin have been working with the SAF Chair to do outreach. For UW Medicine and WWAMI, the Senate budget is a bit different than I understood. It would give UW \$1.2 million. The House Proposal would transfer all \$4.68 million per year from WSU to UW for the first year medical education in Spokane. UW and WSU feel like they got a divorce on this issue, and the government basically said - get back together. The House will give WSU \$1.25 million per year for curriculum development. The House proposed funding for additional medical residencies. Feel free to send me an email if you have any other questions. I have been hearing that conversations between UW Medicine and the Senate are becoming better. Brian and I have been working on a GPSS letter stating our concerns and we have been coordinating with the medical school student government to do some more outreach, because they have sent a letter already. We are attacking this from all fronts, and we will see how it goes. Does anyone have any questions about the details?

Yasmeen: You are organizing the students, and what else are you currently doing?

Alex: Organizing and outreach have been our focus for now.

Alex: Overall the budget is positive, but we have to worry about Spokane and SAF.

WSA Dues

Alex: We are facing an issue with WSA dues. We have a framework where you can cap it at \$15,000, but due to lack of donations, we are somewhat behind on our dues. Some campuses have freaked out in the last week, and they have drafted resolutions. Both the exec director and organization director will be leaving, the budget is without the dues, they won't be able to hire

those. So we are having conversations with campuses. But moving forward, we have a special sub-committee on this subject, we are trying to make sure that this debt conversation is looked at a bit differently. We are working to negotiate to have the ability to pay. They are working on getting more paper to us. The closest thing that I can find to a smoking gun was, there was a discussion in 2012 regarding the budget, essentially passing this to future officers.

Yasmeen: Where is the money suppose to come from?

Alex: That's part of the question, where would the money come from? There is a lot of budget pressure, it changed a lot. Originally we were thinking about leaning toward more in the general fund.

Alice: I don't think we can do that, because we have to build it up to 40-50%.

Alex: If it is a smaller amount, because we have some under-spending in our employees, so we can look into that

Eddie: Remind me of the volunteer rate?

Alex: \$24,000 for the whole year.

Alice: Ours is \$3 voluntary. So 6%.

Eddie: And how much are we short based on that \$24,000?

Alex: We are still trying to figure it out.

Eddie: Would it solve the problem if it increased from 6 to 8%?

Alex: We have talked about changing to opt-in from an opt-out situation.

Eddie: For the short term, even just raising awareness jointly with ASUW on this WSA issue, I think if we can just get a few senators to do that. If we can up it to 7 or 8%, it might solve the problem.

Yasmeen: I don't donate, because I don't know where the donation would go to.

Alice: I think that concern is why we haven't spent a lot of energy in seeking increases in donations. We aren't prepared to push for higher participation rates if its not something that we think is worth our while.

Alex: Past officers knew something was off looking at the minutes, but they still agreed to it.

Alice: Philosophically, in terms of being in WSA, it's nice being in the coalition with other schools. It's nice when we can vote in coalition with other schools, when our school is not necessarily liked. That said, I don't think they need a director, I think they can do something internally to figure something out.

Setting Senate Agenda:

Alice: We have an election coming up.

Natalie: I have last year's agenda up for reference.

Eddie: For the election we should have the Chair introduce the process.

Alice: Do we have forum? Is it possible to have a quick forum now.

Amber: It's not too late, but the situation with candidates this year, they may not be ready.

Yasmeen: But the voting is not until mid-May.

Natalie: There is another debate on May 6.

Amber: We are trying to encourage more groups to collaborate on forums. Or senate forum is in Gowen.

Alice: when is that?

Yasmeen: I was wondering if you can give a 5 minute thing to talk about the forum and just talk about ways that people can have access to candidate information?

Alice: if you wouldn't mind giving a plug, that would be great. I was thinking after the election speeches.

Natalie: Spotlight is from Abe McClenny from SAF (Vice Chair)

- GPSS Spotlight on Abe McClenny, SAF Vice Chair
- GPSS Officer Election Speeches and votes: 45 minutes | action item | Alice
- Update on ASUW Election
- Election Results Announcement
- Union Contract Negotiations Updates from UAW 4121
- Real Food Challenge Resolution | 15 minutes
- Graduate Student Housing Community Outreach | 10 minutes

Alice: Were the elections conducted by the election committee?

Natalie: Seyda explained it, and then she asked each candidate to come up and give speeches.

Eddie: We are suggesting to the chair of the committee, and summarize that there will be a statement calling candidates alphabetically. They will have 3 minutes. And there's Q&A for each position.

Elloise: It was about 5 minutes. It is between 2-4 questions.

Eddie: She asked if anyone wants to run from the floor for any position.

Alex: The other thing is we want to have names on ballots now.

Eddie: We will reiterate that the names need to be included on the ballots.

Alice: You can send them a template, they can prepare for it.

Natalie: The group who wants to talk about mental health, would like to present, but I told them it was a packed agenda. Also the Husky Real Food Challenge, there is a resolution.

Natalie: For the 6th, there's Ana-Mari, Ginger for a resolution, Vanessa for a resolution, and Marnie Brown (student regent) who wants to know what students want in the new President.

Alice: Entertain motion to approve the agenda | Natalie: So moved | Yasmeen: Second

Exec Senate Report

Yasmeen: As SAF oversight committee, we are having the fourth meeting on the 21st from 5-6PM. We will bring up some of the policy issues.

Eddie: facing the Union labor bargaining, if you have any question beyond what you heard today, email us. Also I was selected to sit on student grievance panel. I was pleasantly surprised by how much the student needs were taken into account. Everyone was very efficient and thoughtful.

Alice: what role does the Office of OMA play?

Eddie: I only interacted with the Dean of Academic Affairs: Dr. Kelly Edwards.

Alice: She is the savior of the graduate students at the Graduate school. Kelly would start to come to our meetings, and it would be great to have the interaction between the Graduate School and GPSS.

Elloise: College of Arts and Sciences concert, raising money to build more buildings

Alice: Hopefully when they build it, there will be some buildings for student parents.

Elloise: Students were a little bit less informed at the committee meeting, and it was mostly led by Stacey. I am a bit concerned about that. Until 2014, the document was public, but somehow it was shut down, with the help of Carol Diem, we want to work on gaining access to more information.

Alice: Carol has been doing a lot of analysis and she said that she made a mistake. Their line is- we can't give that data because that would be violating individual privacy.

Eddie: I wonder if the hard to access part is an accident at all.

Alice: The reason the University doesn't want easy access to demographic data is because we are doing very poorly in retaining females and minorities. It's not very diverse.

Officer Reports

Alex: Spokane and WSA

Yasmeen: On behalf of Doug, has the coalition housing publication (ASUW & GPSS) been published?

Natalie: Doug only gave me updates that the Spring Social and the Science and Policy Summit are coming up. I am working on keeping records and archiving to get our books in order. I had a meeting with Ginger Farrell today, she's been doing a lot work in active shooter response preparedness. She found this cool device that can lock doors from the inside. She wants to talk to the senate. It would be kind of cool if she could present on May 6, but I also encouraged her to draft resolution. Diversity events will be finalized soon. Also there is about \$2000 of funding left.

Amber: The admin reception went well, we are officially paying our staff \$11/hour.

Alice: For the Legislative Reception and Huskies on the Hill, I just found out that those events are funded by money that's jointly owned by ASUW and GPSS. I am hoping this can be extended to next year's knowledge base. I hope we can be represented on promotions if events are using both organizations' names. It's no one's fault, it's just a tradition that I look forward to changing. The only representation graduate students have in ASUW is the ability to be a senator and vote.

Amber: You can run for ASUW board as graduate students. Members of SAO said that we include graduate students. But I think it's important to clarify and make that clear.

Alice: There's a difference between being a token in conversations and having an in-depth conversation. And I don't want to take anything away from ASUW. It may sound like that, but if we keep the language, we should start solidifying the relationship between GPSS and ASUW. Tomorrow is the first meeting of the Presidential Selection Committee for the selection of the President of the UW. Also Ana-Mari invited everyone to an event on a conversation on race. I think she's taking a big risk to do something that is unprecedented and that is awesome. She is trying to make the University very inclusive. Next week I am having the first committee meeting for the fee-based programs. Hopefully we can get the childcare topics in. The all student/childcare survey is still open. Do you know if Kristina is sending the survey out?

Amber: I am not sure.

Alice: We are at 11% mark. I am going to send an all student email about the Whole U and Your Kids too. Next week there's bring your kids to school day, and we are collaborating with social workers on the play day on the event.

Yasmeen: Why is the language "Bring your Daughters and Sons to School Day"?

Alice: Good question. I am not sure.

Adjourn:

Alice: Entertain motion to adjourn

Natalie: So moved | Elloise: Second

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.