



Services and Activities Fee Committee Meeting

October 25, 2024 | 1:00 PM | Husky Union Building 303

MINUTES

Call to Order

The Services and Activities Fee Committee Meeting was called to order at 1:08 PM on October 25, 2024.

Roll Call

- Present
 - ASUW: Haley Chee, Khushi Loomba, Annie Chen, Aiden Reeder, Crystal Tran, Jack Prichard
 - GPSS: Ryan Wicklund
 - Advisors: Lincoln Johnson
- Absent
 - GPSS: 4 positions yet to be appointed
 - Advisors: Kristian Wiles (Excused)

Approval of Agenda

The agenda for October 25, 2024 SAF meeting was approved. Motioned by Aiden Reeder, Seconded by Khushi Loomba; unanimous vote to approve the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

The meeting minutes from the 10/18/24 SAF meeting were approved. Motioned by Khushi Loomba, Seconded by Jack Prichard; unanimous vote to approve the minutes.

Public Comment [10 minutes]

Old Business

New Business

1. Budget Packet Creation

Haley scheduled 2 weeks to create the budget packet which will be sent out to Units. The Committee confirmed they had reviewed the budget packet beforehand.

Haley gave a quick overview and highlighted some “wants” the previous Committee had written in their “Letter to the next Committee.” The previous Committee’s questions on the Budget Packet were used as a template for the current Committee to add to or revise.

Haley made a few clarifying notes about some common misconceptions in the questions:

- Regarding Reserves... **Haley** noted most Units do not have solid numbers for their Reserves, making it difficult to provide an accurate estimate.
- Regarding the SAF logo... **Haley** noted this was a new question added to help students understand what they are funding. As a result, many Units have incorporated the SAF logo on their websites and some materials.

Haley noted that SAF rarely allocates funding that is lower than the Unit's current allocation for the year. **Lincoln** adds that the practice for the past 30 years is to not reduce funding unless in drastic measures, such as with Covid.

Haley went through each section in the Budget Packet and encouraged the Committee to suggest any changes they would like to see.

- **Aiden** asked about the typical amount for a line item categorized as “Miscellaneous.”
 - **Haley** responded the range is usually from \$2,000 to \$5,000. This amount can cover a variety of expenses, like travel.
 - **Aiden** asked whether travel should be put as a separate line item?

- **Haley** responded that it depends on the intended use of the travel and what the Unit plans to include with that. Due to the many circumstances for each Unit, questions regarding a Unit's intended use of travel, like this one, are important for Committee members to ask during Unit presentations. However, if the Committee prefers to have travel as its own line item, travel can then be designated for that purpose.
- Directly under "Budget Request Highlights," the original amount to require a separate line item was \$500. In other words, if a purchase was under this \$500 amount, it can be combined with other similar expenses. On the other hand, if a single purchase was over \$500, a line item would need to be created to justify this purchase. **Haley** asked the Committee if they want to make changes to this amount, since this determines how much detail SAF is interested in specific expenses.
 - **Annie** recalls the previous Committee discussed increasing the amount to \$1,000. She supports increasing the amount, noting that knowing each specific expense is not necessary in the grand scheme of things and would only create more unnecessary work for everybody involved.
 - **Khushi** agrees with \$1,000. She agrees that anything higher than that would need further discussion with SAF, especially when expenses can be grouped together.
 - Result: This amount was changed from \$500 to \$1,000.

Last year, Units could increase their budget to a maximum of 8% or \$32,500 over the unit's current allocation for FY25. For smaller units, the \$32,500 cap encourages more ambitious planning as \$32,500 for most Units is almost a third of their budget. On the other hand, larger Units can take a better advantage with the percentage increase. The intention of a specific dollar amount (\$32,500) is to create a more equitable opportunity for smaller units. Larger Units have more flexibility in their budget (i.e. \$32,500 only makes up a small part of their total budget whereas for a smaller Unit, this could take up 20%) and can easily ask for more money with the 8% increase.

- **Ryan** believes that if larger Units can continue to request up to the maximum percentage increase, it would be fair to increase the maximum limit from \$32,500 to \$35,000.
- Result: This was agreed by the Committee to increase to \$35,000.

Lincoln also pointed out based off the policies in place, the fee can only increase up to 3.55%, or by \$6, for FY26. For FY25, SAF allocated around \$22.7 million to Units. If the projected revenue – that is, the estimated amount that SAF is told they can allocate – is lower than the allocated amount after deliberations in the Spring (i.e. if request allocated > projected revenue), SAF will use its Reserves to cover the excess funds not supported by the actual revenue received. Every year, SAF gets closer to narrowing the margin of reliance on the Reserves to offset the excess allocated funding. The Committee last year's goal was to avoid withdrawing \$500,000 from the SAF operational Reserves.

With that in mind, **Haley** would not recommend the Committee to increase the maximum percentage too significantly. With the current increase capped at 8%, Units can be more creative in their budget requests, allowing them to make the most of the available funds. On the other hand, if the Committee chooses to lower the maximum percentage, Units will not be able to request as much in their proposals. This lowers the ratio of the requested allocations but simplifies the Committee's task in allocating funds at the end of the year.

- **Lincoln** emphasized that the maximum percentage is an effective budgetary tool for the Unit. It encourages Units to think creatively and critically at the same time.
- **Annie** is in support of lowering the maximum percentage. She reasoned that it is highly unlikely for SAF to be offering anybody the full 8% increase, especially with her time on the Committee. In contrast, the primary argument for maintaining the 8% is the potential to see Units present more ambitious ideas and goals. Following back to last week's discussions, she wonders if there is a way to incorporate a question that will allow the Committee to see a Unit's future vision, which will address this creativity problem.
 - **Jack** agreed with Annie. He elaborated that if SAF limits the total amount of money that a Unit can receive, it will encourage Units to reflect on their current progress and assess whether it aligns with their main mission, giving a bigger emphasis on the main ideas that the Unit wants to concentrate on their proposals.

- **Khushi** elaborated on the idea of the question by using a moonshot metric to help Units think more expansively about their goals. Additionally, this will also help the Committee see the potential for more innovative proposals.
- To learn more about the budget proposals, **Khushi** asked if Units are allowed to make changes to their proposals once they have sent it.
 - **Lincoln** explained there are some flexibilities for a Unit to move around money within different line items. However, SAF is more focused on how the Unit is doing overall, rather than selectively approving or rejecting specific items within the budget. He noted that almost every Unit will ask for the maximum increase in their proposals.
- Result: Committee are in favor of lowering the maximum percentage increase down to 6% to gain a more realistic idea during proposals but want to ask a creativity-inspired question to get a better insight on Units' long-term.

Traditionally, Unit budget requests were based on information from one year prior. With much data lost over the years by SAF, and the transition period for UW to switch to Workday, **Haley** proposed the idea of extending the 1-year timeline to at least 2 years prior.

- **Khushi** believes it would be helpful to see the Unit's history over the past 5 years. Units will have greater awareness and an increased efficiency for future planning as they review past information and their decisions. She also recommended the Committee members to review the Unit's history to become well-informed during deliberations instead of accepting information at face value.
- **Lincoln** suggested changing the review period from 5 years to 4 years.
- **Haley** believed it is best to also have the Unit include past requested budgets and the allocated budgets for comparison.

Unit Questions:

Haley went over the questions which Units are expected during their budget presentations with the Committee.

Other Revenues

- Ryan suggested changing the wording to include “anticipated” future revenues under “Information on Other Revenues.”

Additional Questions

- Under Question 1 – part C, **Ryan** wanted to place an emphasis on the integral services that Units provide, which are central to their mission.
- Khushi reviewed the document and suggested adding a question about a Unit’s updates on projects from previous years. She emphasized the importance of discussing the historical context, specifically how past allocations were made and the impact they had.
- The Committee created a question that provoked more creative thinking, seen on the Budget Request Packet as Question 2.

Final updates on wording and final questions were made to the Budget Packet.

Aiden motioned to approve the FY26 Budget Packet, Seconded by Khushi; unanimous approval (7-0-0) to approve the FY26 Budget Packet.

Discussion

1. Student Health Fee

Haley gave a background regarding the potential creation of a Student Health Fee. Husky Health, Counseling, and LiveWell suggested creating a new student fee to help maintain their current operating costs. The fee has not been set but it is estimated to be ~\$65 per student to help offset some of their costs to operate, which will free up around \$9 million for SAF to allocate to other Units.

Most other colleges in Washington usually have a health fee implemented. The idea of a Student Health Fee has been under discussion for some time but has been previously rejected. For example, the previous SAF Chair vetoed the fee proposal. However, recent changes were made to the fee, so the idea has become more

viable. The creation of a Committee to discuss this Student Health Fee will be meeting more frequently soon. As of right now, there is no clear vision of how this fee will be structured, but the 3 Units will have to provide justification to initiate this fee.

To give a better understanding of how the creation of the fee works, **Lincoln** referenced the U-Pass quarterly fee. During its development, a survey was sent out with a 10% student response rate. In response, the student government made some adjustments before sending the revised proposal to then by passed to the Board of Regents to officially approve of the fee.

- **Aiden** asked which group of people would maintain or regulate the fee if it came into existence. Overall, he wants to make sure this fee is for the benefit of the students.
 - **Lincoln** clarified that the fee would be developed and managed by students. The fee will most likely be initiated by ASUW and GPSS. **Haley** makes sense to expand this committee to govern this fee.
 - ASUW wants to create a separate committee to manage the fee. However, **Haley** believes it would make more sense to expand the SAF Committee to govern this fee. Furthermore, if the fee is under SAF, it will also put the amount under the 8% increase limit.
 - GPSS understands the students will be concerned with the new health fee but suggested one way to mitigate the new fee is to reduce the Servies & Activities Fee (SAF).

Announcements

Khushi has created the FY26 Finance & Budget (FB) Committee at ASUW.

Adjournment

The SAF meeting was called to adjourn at 2:45PM. Motion to adjourn by Khushi Loomba, seconded by Ryan; unanimous vote to adjourn.