



Cornell University Student Assembly

Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, October 11, 2018 Meeting
4:49pm-6:18pm in Willard Straight Hall Memorial Room

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

- a. V. Devatha called the meeting to order at 4:49 pm.
- b. Roll Call:
 - i. *Present:* D. Barbaria [0], V. Devatha [0], O. Din [2.5], J. Dominguez [0], O. Egharevba [1], A. Hailu [1], S. Harshvardhan [1], N. Hernandez [0], C. Huang [0], S. Iruvanti [0], S. Lim [0], N. Matolka [0], U. Mustafa [0], D. Nyakaru [0], I. Pavlov [0], J. Sim [0], M. Stefanko [1], F. Uribe-Rheinbolt [0], B. Weintraub [1], V. Xu [0]
 - ii. *Absent:* J. Anderson [0], A. Jain [0], K. Kebbeh [1], E. Shapiro [0], M. Shovik [0], I. Wallace [0]
 - iii. *Arrived After Roll Call:* G. Park [0.25], M. Peralta-Ochoa [1.5]

II. Open Microphone I

- a. No speakers at the open microphone.

III. Announcements and Reports

- a. D. Barbaria made a series of announcements in lieu of J. Anderson.
 - i. D. Barbaria said that assembly members are strongly encouraged to participate in the Homeplate program. He also said that J. Anderson recommends Resolution 12 be tabled for today. He added that J. Anderson feels that there is a lot of discussion regarding the Advocacy Agenda, and that it should be tabled today.
- b. D. Barbaria said that there was a meeting with VP Ryan Lombardi regarding Resolution 14. He added that he and V. Devatha approved \$350 of funding for Asha Cornell.
- c. S. Lim said that next week is Mental Health Awareness Week, and that the assembly will be tabling outside on Wednesday.
- d. V. Devatha said that every member of the assembly should table for at least one timeslot.
- e. B. Weintraub said that a new restaurant opened outside of Willard Straight Hall, and that everyone should visit it.
- f. D. Barbaria moved that the meeting return to Open Microphone – **approved.**

IV. Open Microphone II

- a. A community member said that the Straight Edge and Straight from the Market have both opened, and their grand opening ceremony will be Wednesday from 12-4 pm.

- b. D. Barbaria asked what would be going on at the ceremony.
- c. The community member said that the schedule had not yet been confirmed, but it will include a ribbon-tying ceremony to “tie” the relationship between students and Cornell Dining, and that there will be performers and free food from vendors.
- d. V. Devatha said that they have been communicating with the Dean of Students, and that he is reaching out to members of the administration to see the situation regarding room reservations.

V. Business of the Day

- a. Resolution 10: Approving Revisions to Appendix C
 - i. D. Barbaria said that he was added as a sponsor at the last meeting, and that there is still discussion to be had with this resolution. He added that they hope to come back next week with language specifically detailing what is done with the fund.
 - ii. V. Devatha said that no major changes had been made since last week.
 - iii. F. Uribe-Rheinbolt asked if there were any updates regarding why the fund cannot be put back into the endowment.
 - iv. D. Barbaria said that they do not really understand what is written in the Appendix at the moment, and that it is something that will be looked into.
 - v. There was a motion to table the resolution – **tabled**.
- b. Resolution 12: Instituting Bi-Weekly Reports for Representatives
 - i. O. Din moved to table the resolution.
 - ii. V. Devatha said that this resolution can be discussed without J. Anderson present, but it can also be tabled.
 - iii. There was no dissent raised to O. Din’s motion.
 - iv. Motion to table the resolution – **tabled**.
- c. Resolution 13: Creating the Advocacy Agenda ad-hoc Committee (I)
 - i. D. Barbaria said that he thinks it is important for this resolution to be discussed, and moved to table the resolution without tabling the discussion on the resolution.
 - ii. J. Dominguez asked why D. Barbaria made this motion.
 - iii. D. Barbaria said that he thinks it is important for the assembly to discuss this resolution even without its sole sponsor present, especially since it is only 5:01 pm.
 - iv. J. Dominguez asked what the difference would be if this motion is passed.
 - v. D. Barbaria said that the assembly would not be able to make amendments, and it would be unfair to make amendments to a resolution when the sole sponsor of that resolution is not present.
 - vi. J. Sim said that if the assembly is going to enter discussion on a resolution, then it should be opened up to allow amendments, and to do otherwise is less productive.
 - vii. D. Barbaria **withdrew** his motion, and said that the assembly should vote on whether they want this discussion to be had.
 - viii. V. Devatha said that he will allow the assembly to break from general parliamentary procedure.
 - ix. Vote on allowing amendments in the discussion on Resolution 13 – **failed** 8-12-1.

1. This means that no amendments can be made in the discussion on Resolution 13 at this meeting.
- x. D. Barbaria said that he is not a fan of the way this resolution is written, and that there is a lot lacking from it at the moment, and that the assembly needs a clear set of guidelines in the resolution before a committee is formed. He added that he is fully in favor of a creating a document such as this, and that he thinks it is misleading to call it an agenda since no current assembly has any power over a future assembly.
- xi. N. Matolka said that he agrees that this is a great idea, and that he thinks adding something like this will ensure that the assembly follows through with projects. He added that he would want more language on how things would go about, how things would be organized, how overarching initiatives would be decided, and the like.
- xii. J. Sim said that he agrees on the fundamentals of the resolution, but that he does not know why the assembly needs an arbitrary five-member committee, and that he is not sure how the Executive Committee (henceforth Exec) isn't representative of the student body. He added that Exec has a diverse group in terms of backgrounds and colleges, and that he can see concerns about Exec being a bit apart from the rest of the assembly, but that these concerns should be addressed separately. He said that it is hard to enforce committee attendance, and that he does not think this should be the way the assembly goes about this.
- xiii. V. Devatha said that Exec's meetings are in Goldwin Smith 144, that all of its notes are in the relevant Google Drive, and that assembly members can talk to Exec members to find out what is going on.
- xiv. J. Dominguez said that he is sympathetic to the idea of this resolution, but that he thinks it is very bureaucratic. He added that he encourages everyone to look in the relevant Slack channel and see the conversations going on in there, and that he does not think creating more committees will solve this problem. He also said that in terms of establishing long-term goals, keeping the Agenda in Exec makes sense, since it is very representative.
- xv. F. Uribe-Rheinbolt asked if assembly members see the purpose of the Advocacy Agenda as more of a tool for data collection or for ensuring certain values. He also asked if the assembly thinks there are certain values that assemblies will adhere to year by year that can be agreed upon.
- xvi. A member of the GPSA said that the GPCI is divided into ten areas, each with its own chair in charge of changing that section.
- xvii. V. Devatha asked if the GPSA member could give information on the structure of the GPSA.
- xviii. The member said that some of it is much like the SA, but that they also have voting members based on five fields of study.
- xix. V. Devatha asked about the committee structure for the GPSA in general.
- xx. The member said that she is not sure of the exact number, but that each committee chair is elected by representatives, and that chairs will chair their own meetings and are in charge of certain things.
- xxi. V. Devatha said that he is curious because the SA has a lot of committees, and that there have historically been different iterations of the committee structure.

- xxii. The member said that with the GPCI, there are specific sections relevant to some of the GPSA's committees, such that there would be a joint effort between a committee and its relevant GPCI subcommittee, and that even those who are not chairs of these committees must be involved in the rewriting of the GPCI.
- xxiii. V. Devatha asked if all GPSA members are required to be involved in committees other than the GPCI.
- xxiv. Matthew Battaglia said that a member of the GPSA can be on the GPCI committee, but such a member must also be on another committee to count for committee requirements.
- xxv. N. Hernandez said that her biggest problem with bringing the Agenda under Exec is that it is not Exec's job, and that Exec is more of a logistical body. She added that she thinks giving it to Exec would not be making it a priority, and that Exec has a lot to talk about as-is. She also said that Exec can always take on the job if the assembly wants it to, but that she thinks it should just be a committee that non-SA members can sit on too. She added that there is very low voter turnout, so there is a question of to what extent the assembly is actually representative.
- xxvi. B. Weintraub said that he takes issue with the idea that Exec is representative of the student body, and that he thinks the vast majority of the student body doesn't care about what the SA does unless it is particularly relevant to them. He added that SA meetings are not well attended if nothing contentious is being discussed, and that the assembly will lose the viewpoint of people who don't speak out by giving the Agenda to Exec. He also said that he does not think that Exec is necessarily the best group to handle this, and that it should be given to a group that can handle it and make it their priority.
- xxvii. Tirenolu Onabajo said that she completely agrees with N. Hernandez and B. Weintraub, and asked Exec if they feel like they have the capacity and resources to discuss these long-term issues. She added that the members of the assembly are students first, and that people sometimes look at Exec as people with the capacity to do all sorts of things which she does not think is accurate. She also said that she does not see the bureaucracy in the SA, since there is only the main body and its committees. She added that the assembly can debate the number of members in the ad hoc and try to arrive at a more meaningful number, but that the current arbitrariness of the number does not go against the resolution, and that it is still something necessary. She also said that she agrees that SA elections are not representative, and that the first time she got involved was following an incident last semester in Collegetown, and that Exec has not always been as diverse as it is now. She added that delegating this responsibility to Exec is disingenuous and ignoring reality.
- xxviii. V. Devatha said that discussion has been going in circles, and asked for anyone who has anything else to say about Exec's role in the Advocacy Agenda to do so at this time.
- xxix. J. Sim said that there are elections in place, and that it cannot be said that the SA or Exec is not representative because not enough people vote, and that the solution to that is to get more people to vote, rather than create a new committee. He added that if the assembly wants this committee to be

representative, then Exec should at least be included since they are voted on by the assembly who is voted on by community members.

- xxx. M. Peralta-Ochoa said that he disagrees, and that Exec should not necessarily be included since it takes a certain amount of political correctness to get onto the SA and then onto Exec, and that he does not think that Exec is very representative.
- xxxi. J. Dominguez said that he believes that everyone on the assembly wants the same thing in this regard, and said that Exec should work on the Advocacy Agenda in the fall semester, and then in the first or third meeting of the spring semester, Exec would propose it to the assembly at large in a meeting, it would be debated, and would have to be passed unanimously. He added that he thinks there should be more engagement on the SA, and that everyone has the same opportunities to vote.
- xxxii. N. Hernandez asked how members of the assembly would feel about Exec being ex-officio members of the committee, and the committee's chair not being an Exec member.
- xxxiii. V. Devatha asked if there was any opposition to a strawpoll in this regard.
- xxxiv. J. Sim said that he does not believe that this is relevant.
- xxxv. N. Hernandez said that she does not believe that three is necessarily the right number for committee membership, but that there could be SA representatives on there, and that Exec could be on the committee if wanted, but that she thinks Exec should be ex-officio if so.
- xxxvi. D. Nyakaru asked how many other committees Exec already sits ex-officio on, and said that making Exec sit ex-officio on another committee isn't going to change their roles and does not change the fact that there is no unified agenda.
- xxxvii. V. Devatha cut off discussion on Exec's role on the Advocacy Agenda.
- xxxviii. D. Barbaria moved to table discussion on the resolution, pull it from the agenda, and recommit it to Exec.
 - 1. There was no second.
- xxxix. D. Barbaria **withdrew** his prior motion and moved to table discussion on the resolution.
- xl. V. Devatha said that the assembly can return to this after the discussion on Resolution 14.
- d. Resolution 14: Increasing the Minimum LEED Certification
 - i. Julie Kapuvari said that this resolution was presented last week and tabled, and asked if this means that the resolution will be voted on at this meeting.
 - ii. V. Devatha said that J. Kapuvari does not have to talk through the whole resolution today.
 - iii. J. Kapuvari said that this resolution asks to raise the minimum LEED requirement for campus buildings from Silver to Platinum, and for Cornell architects to conduct a comprehensive study on environmental impacts of the North Campus housing project.
 - iv. G. Park said that the last line of the resolution previously asked for the administration to hold a panel to explain the environmental and financial impact on students, and moved to amend line 69 such that "Architecture and Planning" reads "Architecture, Art, and Planning" – **amended**.
 - v. G. Park moved to vote on the resolution.

- vi. V. Devatha said that there is a speakers' list of three people.
- vii. G. Park **withdrew** her motion.
- viii. D. Barbaria said that VP Lombardi had many concerns with this resolution, and that his concerns were focused on lines 44 and 45 which he believes do not accurately reflect how this came about, and that he was also focused on lines 50 and 51. He added that VP Lombardi said that if the university were to go through with lines 50 and 51 of the resolution, any requisite change that takes even one or two months would set the opening of the new dorms back by a year. He also said that this does not mean that the assembly should not pass this resolution or hold the administration accountable, and moved to amend the resolution such that lines 44 and 45 would be removed.
- ix. J. Kapuvari said that she agrees that removing these lines would reduce the friction that the resolution might cause.
- x. F. Uribe-Rheinbolt dissented to the motion on the floor, and asked why the lines were written in such a way in the first place.
- xi. J. Kapuvari said that the proponents of the resolution feel that more communication should have happened, and that students and mental health organizations should have been consulted more.
- xii. F. Uribe-Rheinbolt asked if there was actually more than one opportunity for feedback.
- xiii. D. Barbaria replied in the affirmative.
- xiv. V. Devatha said that the assembly would be moving into voting.
- xv. D. Barbaria asked if F. Uribe-Rheinbolt withdrew his dissent.
- xvi. F. Uribe-Rheinbolt replied in the affirmative.
- xvii. Motion to amend the resolution such that lines 44 and 45 are removed – **amended**.
- xviii. B. Weintraub said that it is very important for the new dorms to be environmentally friendly, but that he does have some concerns, namely that the resolution asks for there to be fewer windows in the new buildings than in the initial proposal.
- xix. J. Kapuvari said that it does not ask for there to be fewer windows, but for there to be smaller windows, which is a smaller ask than the next clause in the resolution.
- xx. Gabriela Vega said that from the mockups provided, it appears that there are full-wall windows on the bottom floors of the new buildings, which is not only inefficient with energy but also raises privacy concerns which has an impact on mental health.
- xxi. J. Kapuvari said that there should be more open communication, and that the proponents of the resolution believe that the window-to-wall ratio is mostly due to aesthetics rather than the stated mental health reasoning, since mental health organizations were not reached out to in this regard.
- xxii. B. Weintraub said that some of the changes in this resolution would very likely push back the timeline, which is already one year later than planned, and that he would be hesitant to pass this resolution in its current state. He added that he thinks that there needs to be more information, and that he does not love the idea of putting out a resolution that states exactly what the assembly wants to happen without all of the facts and seriously considering the significant impacts it might have. He also said that this can lead to a non-

negligible increase in prices, and that the assembly must balance environmental concerns with financial concerns. He added that housing is already expensive on campus, and that he would strongly encourage the rest of the assembly to amend this resolution to take a more investigative approach rather than demanding something of the university or asking that some action be taken. He also said that he does not love the fact that VP Lombardi is not present to speak, and that he thinks this is a very complex project, but that he cannot support the resolution in its current form.

- xxiii. A community member asked if the resolution is claiming that there hadn't been any communication between the administration and students.
- xxiv. J. Kapuvari replied in the negative, saying that there was some communication, and that people who lived off-campus when the email was sent out did not receive the email. She added that the relevant documents are very long and complicated, and that she feels that the communication was not sufficient.
- xxv. The community member said that taking out the lines that were removed was a good thing, and that there were focus groups in this regard years ago, and that people on the assembly at this time may not have been around for them or may not remember them. She added that she thinks that this resolution needs nicer language, and should ask for more rather than saying nothing was done.
- xxvi. J. Dominguez asked if it is too late for the window-to-wall ratio to be changed, and asked about the current status of the buildings.
- xxvii. J. Kapuvari said that nothing has been constructed yet, and that this is why changing the building design is currently the most feasible option.
- xxviii. G. Vega said that the sense that the proponents of the resolution got from the relevant City Hall meeting is that the design process is still underway.
- xxix. J. Kapuvari said that they do not have a lot of information regarding the timeline, and that there are a lot of community activists looking for an environmental impact statement, and that the board agreed that there should be a third party on this. She added that a lot of the facts are already in line and that there is a plan for an investigation.
- xxx. O. Din moved to vote.
 - 1. B. Weintraub dissented, saying that the assembly needs more information, that VP Lombardi should come to an assembly meeting to speak, and that more time is needed to consider amendments.
 - 2. O. Din maintained his motion.
 - 3. The motion to vote **failed**.
- xxxi. G. Park asked if B. Weintraub had any ideas about what more information he would want.
- xxxii. B. Weintraub said that the resolution specifies that it is not fully known what the window-to-wall ratio currently is, and that it seems that the resolution indicates a lack of necessary information.
- xxxiii. G. Park said that such information is not released, which is stated in the resolution.
- xxxiv. J. Kapuvari said that the proponents of the resolution tried to get this information, and that the mockups only say that the dorm rooms are 22%, which is less of a concern than the common rooms which appear to be

100%. She added that all the proponents know is that the ratio should be reduced to increase building insulation during the winter.

- xxxv. B. Weintraub said that he thinks the intention is great in this resolution, but that it comes off as a demand to the administration, which he does not feel is an appropriate thing to do given the depth and significance of the resolution. He added that he thinks that the administration should come in to speak about this.
- xxxvi. M. Peralta-Ochoa asked B. Weintraub why he thinks the assembly owes the administration anything.
- xxxvii. V. Devatha said that all points must be directed to the chair, and ruled M. Peralta-Ochoa's statement dilatory.
- xxxviii. G. Park said that she does not think anything in the resolution is disrespectful aside from the previously removed lines, and that this is about housing for students, and that in order to reach the 2035 goal of carbon neutrality certain standards must be set in order to meet the goal. She added that this is a suggestion, not a demand, and that any of the houses being built right now won't affect any current assembly members, and that it is only to set a standard. She also said that she does not understand where this resolution is disrespectful or demanding at any point.
- xxxix. M. Stefanko said that he feels very uninformed about this resolution, and that he would like to see a cost projection, and that he does not feel comfortable voting without certain information.
 - xl. G. Park said that the resolution was tabled for members to get more information on the resolution between then and now, and that it was any assembly member with questions' job to get more information to do research before the resolution was voted on.
 - xli. V. Devatha asked whether or not the proponents of the resolution have cost projections.
 - xlii. J. Kapuvari said that there are many resources that they can give, that there were articles in the Daily Sun, and that they have access to the mockups. She added that she understand that this is very complicated, but that the resolution had been worked on for the past two months and that there is faculty support on it.
 - xliii. M. Stefanko asked if there is any conclusion as to whether this resolution would make the project more or less expensive.
 - xliv. J. Kapuvari said that she does not believe that that is the case, and that someone in the faculty told the proponents of the resolution that the provost will increase the admittance of students as a result of this project. She added that there is an agreement that the dorms are needed since there is a housing crisis in Ithaca, and that buildings should be more sustainable, and that the administration wants more tuition money.
 - xlvi. V. Devatha said that the question was more about whether implementing the environmental changes here place more of a financial burden on students admitted.
 - xlvi. G. Park said that this is a great point, and that it is unclear at the moment, which is why the resolution pushes for the open forum and the panel so that students can talk to the administration to see what the impact will be.

- xlvi. V. Devatha said that whenever someone has questions about a resolution, especially when it has been tabled, they should reach out to the sponsors. He added that anyone making a resolution going forward should consider the positive and negative externalities of it.
- xlvi. D. Barbaria said that he does not believe that tabling the resolution is necessarily appropriate, and that he does not believe that the resolution is disrespectful, and that it is the assembly's job. He added that the more the resolution is delayed, then the more the administration will have to pay no matter what, and that this resolution says that the assembly is okay with this taking more time because the environmental concerns outweigh the financial concerns.
- xli. There was a motion to vote.
 - 1. There was a dissent.
 - l. G. Vega said that, regarding the climate action plan, the proponents of the resolution have heard from the administration is that if a certain aspect of currently developing technology in the plan does not work out, then the 2035 benchmark goes out the window.
 - li. There was a motion to vote on Resolution 14 – **approved** 15-1-2.
- e. Resolution 13: Creating the Advocacy Agenda ad-hoc Committee (II)
 - i. O. Din moved to table the resolution, saying that he feels like the assembly hit a roadblock regarding the discussion of Exec's role, and that it might be more effective to table it.
 - ii. D. Barbaria said that he thinks the resolution should be recommitted.
 - iii. O. Din said that he agreed, and moved to recommit the resolution to Exec.
 - iv. V. Devatha said that it seemed that there were two facets to Resolution 13, the first would be primarily conducted in the first semester of the academic year, and the second would be conducted the following semester. He added that he believes that the executive archivist should be in charge of this committee since it is an archival role, and that he thinks there should be different project leads for different section. He also said that, regarding implementation, he would like the assembly members to think about how committees and representatives would play a role in the Advocacy Agenda, and that adding another level complicates things such as this. He added that he thinks the GPSA structure as a whole is different from that of the SA, and that the SA would not benefit from the system that the GPSA uses.
 - v. The representative of the GPSA said that when she referred to a person being elected, she meant that GPCI is an ad hoc committee, in which people are appointed and the decision of chairing is made within the committee.
 - vi. O. Egharevba moved to recommit the resolution to Exec.
 - vii. J. Dominguez asked what it means to recommit a resolution.
 - viii. D. Barbaria said that it is sent back to its original committee, and it does not have to be brought to the floor at the next SA meeting.
 - ix. Motion to recommit Resolution 13 – **recommitted**.

VI. Adjournment

- a. V. Devatha adjourned the meeting at 6:18 pm.

VII. Executive Session

Respectfully Submitted,
John Hannan
Clerk of the Assembly