



Cornell University Student Assembly

Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, September 12th, 2019
Meeting, 4:47pm-5:54pm in 302 Appel Commons

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

- a. J. Anderson called the meeting to order at 4:48 pm.
- b. Roll Call:
 - i. Present: J. Anderson, C. Benedict, U. Chukwukere, J. Clancy, J. Feit, M. Haddad, C. Huang, J. Kroll, Y. Li, G. Martin, N. Matolka, I. Pavlov, L. Smith, P. Solovyeva, B. Weintraub, V. Xu, J. Youngblood
 - ii. Absent:
 - iii. Arrived After Roll Call: M. Adegehe, O. Egharevba, K. Wondimu

II. Presentation

- a. Anabel's Grocery
 - i. Three presenters representing Anabel's Grocery introduced themselves and presented.
 - ii. B. Weintraub asked what the business model is at this point in time, since to him it looks as though they are taking a loss, and asked if there is a cap on how much business they will be able to do.
 - iii. One of the presenters said that the first few months will be trial and error in terms of how many people are coming in, and that they are taking a loss on the operating side. He added that they plan on drawing 15% of their subsidy fund at the end of the semester, and that they are looking at fundraising event and grant structures. He also said that it hopefully will not be an issue for a few years, but that it is in their future.
 - iv. Another presenter said that not everything will be sold at a loss or subsidized, and that some items that don't need to be subsidized will be sold at an income.
 - v. B. Weintraub asked what data-gathering systems the representatives are using, and said that they need to make sure that they have the information available to students and stakeholders in the future.
 - vi. A presenter said that they will have a membership program, which would be more like a community, and that those signing up must take a survey that gauges demographics and evaluates cooking, shopping, and eating habits, which would be followed by a post-survey at the end of the semester to see if they're meeting their goals. She added that they're also going to use systems to keep track of their income and revenue.
 - vii. B. Weintraub said that he just wants to make sure that there's data on every transaction.
 - viii. A presenter replied in the affirmative.

- ix. V. Xu said that she wanted to mention that for resources, she would reach out to hotel professors who had run restaurants in the past, and that there's a great social entrepreneurship brand with the bulk purchasing model, and that some of the professors might be able to help with that model.
- x. A presenter said that they do have an advisory board built into that, and that they have someone on the board who teaches about nonprofit structures.
- xi. Y. Li asked a question.
- xii. A presenter said that they would welcome Y. Li coming to them afterward to speak on that, and that they have seen some international events where there has been food, and that they would be interested if they'd like to source from the store for that.
- xiii. I. Pavlov said that she sat on the advisory board last year, and that one of the things that she was excited about was seeing the syllabus for the class, and asked if the presenters took it, and what their final projects in it were.
- xiv. One of the presenters said that two of the three of them took the class, and that the third is one of the "veterans" of Anabel's and therefore was already involved prior to the inception of the class. He added that it really broke the mold of a traditional class and they were able to put out a lot of ideas, and that he worked a lot on the supplier relationships, which was very tentative at the time and had to be brought about by doing a lot of work over the summer.
- xv. Another presenter said that through that class, they did learn a lot about the food justice aspects, and that she worked a lot on rebranding their look and the store itself, and learning how they can work food justice into every aspect of their store. She added that that's what she has been learning, but that the class changes with every new cohort and every new semester.
- xvi. J. Clancy said that this is an important issue for a lot of students at Cornell, and that he was wondering what the cause for the change to the horizontal structure was.
- xvii. A presenter said that Anabel's was mainly a community of students, of which the class was only a portion, and that some students involved were just interested in doing it as a resume-builder, and that having the vertical structure in place made it seem like some people's decisions were more important than others'. She added that putting everyone on the same playing field was critical and will be important for them, and that everyone has the autonomy to decide what should be happening. She also said that she thinks people were intimidated by the power that people had and were afraid to make decisions, but now everyone has the power to make decisions which is totally different.
- xviii. Another presenter said that they had a very passionate g-body who were somewhat pigeonholed by the e-board, and that the g-body were never really cued in on that.
- xix. The first presenter said that there was a disconnect in communication and that passion at the bottom was being unrecognized and lost, and that this allows them to throw all their ideas back and forth at each other. She added that this is building this greater community structure within the team that will benefit all of them.
- xx. M. Adeghe said that what the presenters have been doing is amazing.

- xxi. L. Smith said that he knows that the university has plans for a food pantry, and asked if that affects what Anabel's will be doing.
- xxii. A presenter said that the university decided to take action on the issue due to the actions of a graduate student who started a food pantry last year, and that a lot of the details regarding it are still up in the air.
- xxiii. There was general assent to the fact that it will be opening by the end of October in the former Sigma Epsilon house.
- xxiv. The presenter said that they are trying to tackle food insecurity as well as the social systems that cause food insecurity.
- xxv. Another presenter said that it is important to realize that food pantries are essential, but will not necessarily have healthy and wholesome foods available at them, and that food pantries work wonderfully for people who need food access right then, but that they also have to think about where people are getting their vitamins and minerals. She added that this is what they are going for, and that they do appreciate the food pantry and its worth.
- xxvi. C. Benedict said that they have been talking a lot about food justice, and asked if they have looked into indigenous food sovereignty or indigenous foods at all, and that they are at the intersection of what they are talking about and that it would be good for Anabel's to look into it. He added that there are some professors in the indigenous studies program studying that, and looking at what pesticides and invasive species do to the food there.
- xxvii. A presenter said that that sounded good, and that they don't know everything about food justice and that it would be a great opportunity. She added that they can't look into that right now, but would want to further down the line.

III. Approval of the Minutes

- a. G. Martin moved to amend the September 5th minutes, such that section xxx in the "Presentation" section will have the word "just" removed – amended.
- b. Motion to approve the September 5th minutes – approved.

IV. Open Microphone

- a. No speakers on the open microphone.

V. Announcements and Reports

- a. C. Huang said that Clubfest will be on Sunday, and that each SA member must sign up to be at the booth for an hour shift.
 - i. I. Pavlov said that two of the shifts are an hour and 20 minutes, and that some members have not signed up, and that she will contact personally those members who have not signed up by Friday.
- b. B. Weintraub asked if they can get Slack back for internal communications.
 - i. There was general assent to the fact that C. Huang has been working on it.
- c. B. Weintraub said that the first SA Dining meeting of the year will be this coming Tuesday at 4:30 pm in Alice Cook House, and that they would like to have as much SA attendance as possible.
 - i. C. Huang asked where in Cook House they will be meeting.
 - ii. B. Weintraub said that it will be in the common area.
- d. M. Adeghe asked why they can't use the Slack that they used last year.
 - i. J. Anderson said that updating last year's Slack is what C. Huang is working on.
 - ii. Gina Giambattista asked if the SA would like her to set up a Slack for them.

- iii. J. Anderson replied in the negative, and said that using the one from last year is good for continuity.
- e. N. Matolka said that according to SHAC bylaws, they need at least three different SA members on three different committees, and that one is understaffed according to those rules, so anyone interested in joining that committee should let him know.
 - i. G. Martin asked what the time commitment for that would be.
 - ii. N. Matolka said that it would most likely be once a month, but that it could be biweekly.
- f. V. Xu said that chairs of committees should start checking their applications and approving or rejecting them.
 - i. I. Pavlov asked if she can accept someone already if she approves of them.
 - ii. V. Xu clarified.
 - iii. B. Weintraub asked if all committees need to get their staffing approved.
 - iv. V. Xu replied in the affirmative.

VI. New Business & Business of the Day

- a. Resolution 5: Approval of the 2019-2020 Elections Committee Members
 - i. Lydia Zheng said that the resolution is just to approve the members of the Elections Committee.
 - ii. J. Anderson said that this always happens since it is in their governing documents, and that Elections Committee membership must be put to a public vote.
 - iii. B. Weintraub asked what the representation is by college.
 - iv. L. Zheng said that two are in Human Ecology, two are in Arts & Sciences, and the rest are in Industrial & Labor Relations. She added that she tried very hard for representation from other colleges.
 - v. O. Egharevba made a statement.
 - vi. B. Weintraub said that O. Egharevba has run uncontested the past two years, and should try and get someone to run against him.
 - vii. J. Anderson called for decorum, and said that SA members should conduct themselves as they would in a normal meeting despite the more informal setting.
 - viii. There was a motion to move this resolution into Business of the Day – **approved.**
 - ix. Motion to vote on Resolution 5 – **approved** 19-0-1.
- b. Resolution 6: Resolution Urging Cornell University to Call Upon the Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy (AURA) to Divest from the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) Construction on Mauna Kea
 - i. C. Benedict asked the assembly members to read over the resolution while he set up his presentation.
 - ii. C. Benedict presented the resolution, gave historical context for American presence in Hawaii, and gave modern-day context for the content of the resolution.
 - iii. N. Matolka said that C. Benedict's presentation was incredible, and asked whether or not other schools have done this already, and how it has worked for them if so.
 - iv. C. Benedict said that petitions have been circulated in other schools, and that Yale students have written to their astronomy department, but no one has had much success yet, and that if they were to get the university to publicly

call out AURA for this, they would definitely be the first in the Ivy League to do so.

- v. J. Kroll asked if C. Benedict could elucidate on some of the wording, and asked whether using the word “apartheid” rather than “genocide” in lines 113-116 would be better. He added that the actions here seem to be more representative of an apartheid state, which does fall on the Board of Trustees’ criteria for divestment.
- vi. C. Benedict said that it is cultural genocide, and that they are desecrating the center of native Hawaiians’ existence, and that apartheid is definitely an accurate term as well, but one without the same impact as genocide.
- vii. J. Kroll said that while the terms do have impact, there are concrete definitions, and genocide has more to do with the killing of people.
- viii. C. Huang said that this is not a divestment resolution to her understanding, and that it does not have to fall specifically under the language that J. Kroll was referencing.
- ix. C. Benedict said that it is still apartheid, but that cultural genocide also exists, and that he thinks the use of cultural genocide is absolutely applicable to this situation. He added that J. Kroll gave him the textbook definition of genocide, but that that definition is also what the United States and Canada use to refute claims of genocide made by indigenous peoples, and that he would suppose that he would be open to changing the word if that is what is being asked of him, but that it seems pretty accurate to him.
- x. M. Adeghe thanked C. Benedict for the presentation, and said that she understands the frustrations that come with speaking up for what one believes in and not having their words heard or respected.
- xi. G. Martin thanked C. Benedict for standing up about this, and said that in discussing genocide and an apartheid state, he thinks that it is different when it is looked at from a textbook perspective versus critical race theory. He added that in critical race theory, there is a discussion about murder through the soul rather than through the body, and that it is important that they are equated, and that this is mass murder of the soul and is therefore genocide.
- xii. J. Feit said that he wanted to echo everyone else’s thanks, and that the presentation and the resolution were both fantastic, and that he does not think that the wording should be changed, since that would dilute the importance here. He added that this is cultural genocide, and that they are not only oppressing them, but also seeking ways to erase the heritage and culture of the native people of Hawaii, and that would define a cultural genocide in his mind. He also said that C. Benedict would maybe want to add the word “cultural” to signify that that is what they are talking about here, but that he doesn’t think they should change the word from “genocide” to “apartheid”.
- xiii. Deborah Nyakaru asked if C. Benedict would like the resolution to be moved into Business of the Day so that it can be passed today.
- xiv. C. Benedict replied in the affirmative.
- xv. Motion to move the resolution to Business of the Day – approved.
- xvi. Motion to vote on Resolution 6 – approved 16-0-1.

VII. Adjournment

- a. J. Anderson adjourned the meeting at 5:54 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
John Hannan
Clerk of the Assembly