



Memorial Student Union, Room 201 • 50 Lower College Road • Kingston, Rhode Island 02881 • T: 401.874.2261 • E: info@rhodysenate.org

## URI STUDENT SENATE – GENERAL ASSEMBLY MINUTES April 13, 2022

**A. CALL TO ORDER** - Speaker Bove called the meeting to order at 6:33pm.

### **B. ROLL CALL**

Present: Bailey, Bose, Bove, Breese, Buono, Chadronet, Cronan, Del Bonis, Gibson, Goswami, Johnson N, Leggett, Montoya, Peckham, Rizk, Scotti, Summerson, Tyson, Waryas.

Absent: Collins, Cushman, Galliano, James, Johnson O, Myers, Palmer, Sutton.

Guests: Kiernan, Gamache, Hoover, Eustis, Thiel, Campbell, Stiles, St-Germain, Boyd, Frasier, Chambers, Fitzgerald, Keppler, Lynch-Gadeleta, Sickie, Snee.

### **C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Speaker Bove motioned to add Uhuru Sasa members to public forum. Seconded by Senator Gibson.

*Motion Passes.*

Senator Gibson motioned to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Senator Tyson.

*Motion Passes.*

### **D. READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Senator Gibson motioned to approve the minutes for Meeting A. Seconded by Senator N. Johnson

*Motion Passes.*

Senator Gibson motioned to approve the minutes for Meeting B. Seconded by Senator Chadronet.

*Motion Passes.*

### **E. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Senator Gibson gave a shout out to Senator Del Bonis and the Cultural Committee for their hard work on the Campus Cleanup event.

### **F. PUBLIC FORUM .**

**Northwoods Challenge Course Presentation:**

Melissa Boyd, Alison Jackson Frasier, Shawn Chambers, MacKenzie Fitzgerald, Camryn Keppler, Blaine Lynch-Gadeleta, Brady Sickle, Abigail Snee.

Discussion: The Northwoods Team is requesting a \$20,000 grant and an annual budget in order to fund maintenance projects.

Questions & Answers:

Director Hoover stated his support for the request.

Senator Tyson asked where the funds would need to be allocated from.

Answer: The Tax Apportionment Reserve Account.

Senator Montoya asked if the Northwoods Challenge Course would be able safely operate in the fall without a \$20,000 grant.

Answer: No.

**Uhuru Sasa Members:**

Requested that they be given their full budget request so that they can pay for their annual fashion show.

Director Hoover explained that he had originally left Uhuru Sasa out of his budget proposal by mistake, and that they would be getting a new appropriation as part of the budget correction bill currently on the floor. He further explained that while they were receiving a more appropriate budget in this new legislation, that their full budget request was not necessary to fund their planned events for the upcoming year. Additionally he explained that \$12,000 of their budget request was intended to rent out the Ryan Center for their fashion show, but that even that amount of money would be insufficient to rent out that venue and instead they should look to use a less expensive venue such as Edwards Auditorium. He concluded his statement by saying that in the past Student Senate has fully funded Uhuru Sasa events; however, they continued to charge admission fees which they profited off and placed into their fundraising accounts, explained that this was against Senate Finance Rules, and encouraged them to apply for a contingency grant if additional funding is needed next year.

Dr. Stiles asked if ticket sales were necessary due to Senate not covering the full cost of events, or if the ticket sales were just meant for extra revenue.

Cheryl replied that there was enough money from Senate to pay for their event and that the money brought in for ticket sales was 100% profit allocated to Uhuru Sasa's fundraising account.

Uhuru Sasa members responded that they didn't believe that to be true and that they sold tickets to break even.

Senator N. Johnson asked about what sort of attendance the fashion show saw prior to COVID and asked if Uhuru Sasa would be interested in partnering with SEC.

Uhuru Sasa members responded that they usually hit capacity and are looking for bigger venues to bring in more people.

Director Hoover said that he thinks it might be better to leave things as is for now and allow for contingency grants in the future.

President Kiernan stated that he remembers Senate giving Uhuru Sasa a contingency grant for their fashion show prior to COVID.

Senator Rizk asked if the Treasury Committee provides clubs with a list of rules when receiving contingency grants.

Director Hoover replied that all rules are listed in the Finance Handbook.

Uhuru Sasa members asked if they were likely to receive a contingency grant in the amount of \$10,000 to pay for their events if requested.

Director Hoover replied that they would likely receive the grant as long as they could provide the appropriate information.

### **Pierre St-Germain, Director of URI Dining Services.**

Speaker Bove opened discussion by introducing Director St-Germain and explaining the senate's opposition to the 2022-2023 dining plans as stated in previously passed legislation. Especially the large reduction in RAM Account allocations as part of meal plans.

Director St-Germain replied that the ram account was created years ago as a way for students to have one card experience. He inherited the program but personally doesn't like that it is under the purview of Dining Services. He

further stated that Dining Services is trying to move away from the ram account as it costs them a lot of money with very little return on their investments.

Discussion:

Speaker Bove: I disagree because I look at it from a consumer's perspective. The dining plan has changed every year I've been here. Last year it was grab and go's divided out by semester basis, whereas now it's by a weekly basis. Now this change means that I cannot use this money for things like laundry. I feel like this should have been brought to the senate before it was finalized. We shouldn't have been bypassed for this decision.

Director St-Germain: Is the dining plan supposed to support your ability to do laundry or to eat? Dining services support all of URI, we partner with the emporium, we don't have to support them. It doesn't sit well in my budget to have the ram account.

Senator Montoya: I have a very specific question about the donation system. Throughout my years here, it seems purposefully complicated to donate [grab and go's], you can only donate once a week. It is masterfully hidden. In regards to dining dollars, will there be an attempt to make a reserve for people to donate?

Director St-Germain: Yes, there will still be a donation factor involved. We, dining services, have budgeted to hire someone as a permanent coordinator. I understand where you're coming from. I don't think that it's overly complicated to find [the donation system].

Senator Peckham: How much is one swipe to get into the dining hall?

Director St-Germain: The door rate is based on whatever meal service you are going to use.

Senator Peckham: You stated that dining made these changes because the way the grab and go's worked was too confusing for the students to use. [Your new proposed method] is even more difficult for students.

Director St-Germain: There are only about 900 beds that allow for flex plans. Those are usually held by upperclassmen. You should be able to handle that as just a part of life. Part of it is about how we track it from a financial and budgetary standpoint.

Senator Peckham: Did dining make these changes for the benefit of the students or for the benefit of the dining hall?

Director St-Germain: The decision was made for a variety of reasons. I can't answer that question fairly.

Senator Bailey: If you are getting rid of the grab and go's, how will that be helping the students, especially those

who are living on a budget?

Director St-Germain: Do you know what the increase in inflation for food was this year? We donate food to various student groups. I appreciate where you are coming from, but at some point we have to be reasonable about how we handle it.

Senator Chadronet: I'm running for Campus Affairs Chair. I think we could meet you. \*obscure\*

Director St-Germain: I wholeheartedly agree...

Senator Rizk: Is there a limit to the amount of dining dollars you can use per day?

Director St-Germain: No...

Director St-Germain: [answer to Rizk question, obscured] I track how effective a meal plan is. If everyone was going through all of their grab and go's, it would reflect that we were offering everybody everything they wanted. But that is not the case. There are tens of thousands of grab and go's that are wasted per year. It doesn't always translate that students are able or willing to donate. I can certainly review all of this. If the ram account is the lynchpin, that is the problem.

Senator Buono: For the last meeting, when we talked about the grab and go's were too confusing, I was wondering if there were reviews written on the dining website?

Director St-Germain: I have explained grab and go's as combos but parents have no idea what I'm talking about. It is a blessing and a curse.

Chair Tyson: Hi, thank you for coming. From my understanding, you are ending your partnership from emporium restaurants, because you cannot handle the financial burden

Director St-Germain: That is not entirely the case. If you go to Niche, and you look at URI and the dining program, people say that everyone loves the emporium. Years ago, we felt that we could send students up there instead of doing the job ourselves. Ram accounts can be used throughout campus. What we are trying to do is help the community.

Chair Tyson: You want dining services to have more responsibility for serving students food.

Director St-Germain: That's my job.

Chair Tyson: How will you respond to students that want more cultural foods?

Director St-Germain: I hope you guys have a better dining experience than I ever did. I would love to tell my staff that that was the request of the student body.

Chair Tyson: I am tentatively not the cultural affairs chair. If I created some sort of survey and told students that they want specific types of foods, will you at least look at it?

Director St-Germain: As long as I've been here, I have been asking students to introduce meal plans, help give us feedback on new concepts, and lead into that concept. I am fifty years old, is it fair that I decide what you all eat? I need feedback from you all or I will think you all want sushi, or want a burrito bowl station. We do a survey every year, it is a hit or miss type situation. I am willing to make things more diverse. It all comes from student feedback

President Kiernan: Hi Director St Germain. How likely are you to make any changes to this plan? Why were the students' opinions not considered before? Why wasn't this brought to the Senate?

Director St-Germain: You're asking about the finance part of it.

President Kiernan: But we handle 1.1 million dollars per year.

Director St-Germain: And I handle over 20 million dollars.

Speaker Bove: Frankie minor made a similar move. He was in the hot seat. However, he has before coming to the Senate...

Director St-Germain: Every year, someone has said to me, we will be on top of that. That never happened. I'll be honest, I hope this stays like this for a long time. There was a situation where every year we had a different meal plan. After this year, I hope to never revisit this anytime soon.

Senator Gibson motioned to end public forum. Seconded by Senator Peckham.

*Motion Passes.*

Speaker Bove motioned to move to New Business. Seconded by Senator Peckham.

*Motion Passes.*

## **G. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

- Student Organization Committee
- Academic Affairs Committee
- External Affairs Committee
- Cultural Affairs Committee
- Campus Affairs Committee
- Executive Committee

President Kiernan reported that there were a lot of great ideas in the student leadership forum earlier today. She also asked senators to let her know if they know of anyone interested in serving on the court.

## **H. REPORT OF THE COURT**

### **I. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

### **J. SPECIAL ORDERS**

*Nomination and Confirmation of the Jurists of the Court*

*Nominations and Elections for Speaker of the Assembly*

Nominee: Speaker Bove

Nominator: Chair Tyson

Second: Senator Gibson

Results: Bove 17      Abstentions: 0

***Senator Bove is elected Speaker of the Assembly.***

*Nominations and Elections for the Chair of the Student Organizations  
Committee*

Nominee: Senator Gibson

Nominator: Chair Tyson

Second: Speaker Bove

Senator Gibson: I was Senate Vice SOC chair. I understand that I have big shoes to fill. Chair Seigle gave me a SOC boot camp last week.

Results: Gibson: 18      Abstentions: 0

***Senator Gibson is elected Chair of the Student Organizations Chair.***

*Nominations for the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee*

Nominee: Senator Summerson

Nominator: Chair Tyson

Second: Senator Gibson

Senator Summerson: Watching Katherine and Kyra has been really inspiring. Something I want to focus on is to push faculty to provide mental health resources. Some other ideas for the upcoming term include the women's summit. I will be working with VP Gamache, and it will happen this year.

Results: Summerson: 17      Abstentions: 0

***Senator Summerson is elected Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee.***

*Nominations for the Chair of the External Affairs Committee*

Nominee: Senator Bose

Nominee: Senator Scotti

Nominator: Senator Summerson

Nominator: Senator N. Johnson

Second: Chair Tyson

Second (2): Senator Gibson

- Senator Bose: I would like to say that I served as Kiernan's vice chair. My goal is to be chair of the External Affairs committee. One of my main goals is to work with faculty to move back barriers on fine arts parking lot. I look forward to continuing former chair Kiernan's work.
- Senator Scotti: Hello everyone, I also want to continue former chair Kiernan's work. I'd like to conduct a voter registration drive for the upcoming primary election. I hope to make as many students able to vote as possible. I will post weekly updates to the URI instagram page. In November, I will be working with Speaker Bove. I am excited about the prospect of serving as External Affairs chair.

President Kiernan: I just want to speak about Senator Bose. I am not the kind to delegate work, yet he has taken the role of the external affairs chair even before



he was not made for the position.

Director Hoover: Despite the fact I have to live with this kid, he is a hard worker. And that is what we need. One of the goals he was talking about was increasing visibility within the committee.

Chair Tyson: What flaws do you see in the committee?

Senator Scotti: I feel that external is too Narragansett focused. I want to focus more on the low income students. The committee needs to do more. We didn't even have that many meetings.

Senator Bose: External affairs needs to do more in the Senate. I believe we do not hold enough events.

Senator Johnson: What can we do with the bus system moving forward?

Senator Bose: I will certainly enlist [Bove's] help to make sure transportation is affordable for everyone. A goal for me is to make everything more inclusive.

Senator Scotti: \*Discussed more about changes he could make within external\*

Senator Peckham: My support lies with Senator Scotti. He lives on campus, so I think that will be more beneficial. I think James is a good guy, and has worked hard enough for it.

Results: Bose: 6          Scotti: 12

***Senator Scotti is elected Chair of the External Affairs Committee***

*Nominations for the the Chair of the Cultural Affairs Committee*

Nominee: Senator Tyson

Nominator: Senator Peckham

Second: Senator Gibson

Senator Tyson: Discussed initiatives she plans to launch next term

Results: Tyson: 17      Abstentions: 0

**Senator Tyson is elected Chair of the Cultural Affairs Committee**

*Nominations for the Chair of the Campus Affairs Committee*

Nominee: Senator Chadronet

Nominator: Senator Gibson

Second: Senator Summerson

- Senator Tyson nominated Senator Montoya. Seconded by Senator N. Johnson.

Nominee: Senator Montoya

Nominator: Senator Tyson

Second: Senator N. Johnson

- Senator Chadronet: I learned a lot from office hours. I have sponsored some bills. This is my calling. I started off with three committees, but I cut down to one, being Campus Affairs. Gamache was working on the Blue Light Project. As far as the On-Flow Initiative goes, I wish to delegate that work to a female. I discussed with VP Gamache about the parking situation. I hope to get closer to Pierre and his advisors, despite the tension from tonight. One more thing I want to bring up is water fountains. We need a lot of those. I will not use this position as a ladder to get more power, I wish to stay as campus affairs chair because I care about this position.
- Senator Montoya: What I have done is leg work. Whether it was tracking down the progress of the mask survey. What I will promise is that I will do the leg work. I like the idea to move Aunt-Flow. This is also my last year, and I want to leave an impact on this campus before I leave.
- Chair Tyson: You said you want to delegate On-Flow to females. What is your mindset of saying I want to delegate this to someone who identifies as female?
- Senator Montoya: I don't know the experience of having a period. I can't go inside [female] bathrooms. That is an invasion of privacy
- Senator Chadronet: What I should have said is that I want someone with personal experience with that and offer the [responsible] to them.
- Senator Johnson: What do you plan on doing with that [experience with Pierre].

- Senator Chadronet: I will talk to people in the Senate who were more targeted than I was. I saw some questionable, disrespectful things. I hope to resolve or retaliate [on the issue].
- Senator Montoya: If Pierre continues to disrespect the Senate, I will make him regret it. Whether it is writing a bill condemning him, or going to his office with lots of questions, annoying questions. It's unfair that the only vegan option is the vegetable roll.
- Senator Buono: I was on Campus Affairs. He was very dependable. He was a great resource.
- Senator Summerson: Hi guys, going back On-Flow, I recommend choosing a female-identifying vice chair.
- President Kiernan: Gamache says that support is on campus. It has been shown from the first day he was in office. He has been so attentive and has learned so much. He would be an essential benefit to the committee. He is always, always in the office, working hard, coming to me before I was sworn in as president.
- Senator Bailey: I have a question for both of you: How do you guys plan on making sure you get student feedback regularly and doing something about that student feedback?
- Senator Montoya: Campus affairs has some social media. I think it is important to have active engagement with campus. Whether it is asking for dining services for giving us complaints information, (...).
- Senator Chadronet: Montoya gave us a valuable gift: he gave us emails of department chairs. We can use it as an asset in the future...

Chair Gibson motioned to call the question. Seconded by Chair Summerson.

*Motion Passes.*

Results: Chadronet: 15                      Montoya: 3

***Senator Chadronet is elected Chair of the Campus Affairs Committee.***

*Nominations and Elections for At Large Representative (3)*

Chair Tyson nominated Dayanara Monzon. Seconded by Senator Summerson

Senator Bose nominated Joe Rotella. Seconded by Senator Summerson.

Senator N. Johnson nominated Zach Breene. Seconded by Senator Buono.

Results: Monzon: 17    Rotella: 16    Breene: 13

***The nominees are elected.***

*Nominations and Elections for Off Campus Representative (4)*

*Nominations and Election for On Campus Representatives (4)*

Senator Summerson nominated Ava Piacentini. Seconded by Chair Tyson.

Senator Gibson nominated Violet Johnson . Seconded by Chair Tyson

Senator Gibson nominated Elise Newman. Seconded by Chair Tyson

Senator Sumemrson nominated Amelia Emison. Seconded Chair Tyson

Results: Piacentini: 17                  Johnson: 17                  Newman: 17                  Emison: 17

***The nominees are elected.***

*Nominations and Elections for College of Nursing Representative (1)*

*Swearing in of Members of the Cabinet, Committee Chairs, and New Senators*

Speaker Bove motioned to table to next week. Seconded by Senator Gibson.

*Motion Passes.*

**K. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**L. NEW BUSINESS**

**SS-22/23-01 Bill Correcting the Student Senate Budget for FY23**

Whereas, at the March 30, 2022 meeting of the General Assembly significant changes were made to the Treasury Committee's proposed Student Senate budget for FY23, and

Whereas, these changes have caused major discrepancies and issues with the budget that must be corrected, now therefore be it,

Resolved, the presented budget allocation amounts as amended are enacted for Fiscal Year 2023, and be it further,

Resolved, that this legislation supplements bill SS-21/22-42 and all organizations not listed in this legislation will receive the budget allocated to them through the passage of the above mentioned bill.

SPONSORS: Speaker Bove, Senators Chadronet, Scotti, Gibson, and Peckham

BILL HANDLER: Speaker Bove (Director Hoover)

DATE: April 13, 2022

RECOMMENDATION: (5 – 0 – 0)

EXPIRATION: Valid Until Reviewed

ACTION: Vote Next Week

Director Hoover explained the bill on the floor and called for unity amongst the senate on this issue.

SEC members were yielded the floor to speak on their budget request. They explained that with their current budget they will not be able to put on many of their current events such as welcome week and other campus events.

Director Hoover stated that SEC provides a great service to the Student Body and reiterated his support for the budget correction bill.

Senator Chadronet motioned to immediately consider. Seconded by Senator Montoya.

*Motion Passes.*

*Bill Passes.*

## **M. GENERAL DISCUSSION AND OPEN FORUM**

## **N. ADJOURNMENT**

Speaker Bove adjourned the meeting at 9:19 PM.