



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 October 19, 2022

A. CALL TO ORDER - Speaker Bove called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Bailey, Bose, Bove, Breene, Breese, Buono, Chadronet, Collins, Cronan, Del Bonis, Emison, Galliano, Gibson, Goswami, Johnson N, Johnson V, Montoya, Peckham, Perrone, Piacentini, Rudolph, Scotti, Summerson, Sutton, Tyson, Waryas.

Absent: Broccoli (excused), Johnson O, Myers, Palmer (excused).

Guest: Minor, Reynolds, Stiles, Gamache, Hoover, Njeru.

C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Gibson motioned to move special order to immediately after public forum. Seconded by Senator N. Johnson.

Motion Passes.

Speaker Bove motioned to amend the agenda to reflect that there are three open seats for at large representative rather than four. Seconded by Senator Peckham.

Motion Passes.

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

Motion Passes.

D. READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Chair Gibson motioned to approve the minutes. Seconded by Senator Montoya.

Motion Passes.

E. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Speaker Bove gave a reminder that only members of the senate can sit at the table. He also wish Senator Breene a happy birthday and congratulated Chair Chadronet for a successful Blue Light Walk.

F. PUBLIC FORUM

Frankie Minor, Director of Housing and Residential Life

Dr. Ellen Reynolds, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs

Director Minor introduced himself and gave an update on the university's current housing crisis. He stated that the university's decision to eliminate triples, coupled with a large increase in housing demand, has resulted in a severe shortage of available housing assignments for students. He laid out several plans that the Department of Housing and Residential Life (HRL) is considering to solve this issue, such as the reintroduction of tripling, potentially building a new residence hall, and potentially allowing for private companies to offer on campus housing. He also stated that students who are still on the housing waitlist will be prioritized for housing assignments next semester.

Speaker Bove took the opportunity to say "I told you so" in regards to the university's decision to detriple first year residence halls. He then asked if Director Minor can ensure that the university will not admit a larger first year class next year, taking up the newly created housing space, and putting us all in the same situation we are currently facing.

Vice President Reynolds stated that the university actually intends to admit slightly fewer students this year in comparison to previous years, and that the university is expecting a first year class of approximately 3,300 students.

Speaker Bove asked how many students took advantage of voluntary tripling this year.

Director Minor replied that nineteen students currently live in triples.

Vice President Reynolds stated that triples will be reintroduced in three residence halls, Barlow, Weldin, and Hillside.

Senator Montoya asked how transfer students are dealt with in terms of priority housing placement.

Director Minor replied that transfer students are in a unique group of their own and that HRL works with Dean Libutti to get those students housing as needed.

Chair Summerson asked what LLC's will be in Barlow, Weldin, and Hillside.

Director Minor replied, the College of Nursing, the College of Engineering, and the College of Environment and Life Sciences.

Senator Breene asked if HRL still has seniors and juniors grouped together for housing assignment.

Vice President Reynolds responded that, yes they do, but they are working to fix the housing shortage so that this group of students doesn't continue to be disproportionately negatively affected.

Senator N. Johnson:asked if there will be funding in next year's budget to build new housing.

Vice President Reynolds replied that there has actually been an allocation made in this year's budget, called a cushioner, that would allow HRL to borrow money to construct a new residence hall should they decide to.

Vice President Reynolds asked what senators have been seeing in the off campus housing market and was told by many senators that it has become incredibly expensive.

Director Minor stated in closing that he would be working with Speaker Bove and Chair Chadronet on this issue as well as issues relating the shower security and vending machines.

Speaker Bove thanked Director Minor and Vice President Reynolds for their time.

G. SPECIAL ORDERS

Nominations and Elections for Off Campus Representative (1)

Chair Gibson nominated Ella Stall. Seconded by Chair Summerson..

Total Votes: Stall: 25 Abstentions: 0

Nominations and Elections for At Large Representative (4)

Senator Buono nominated Justin Meyers. Seconded by Senator Breene.

Total Votes: Meyers: 26 Abstentions: 0.

Nominations and Elections for First Year Representative (5)

Chair Summerson nominated Danny Barbosa. Seconded by Senator N. Johnson.

Chair Summerson nominated Olivia Rathbun. Seconded by Senator N. Johnson.

Chair Summerson nominated Meilin Quiroca Reyes. Seconded by Senator Montoya.

Chair Gibson nominated by Blessing Oyedele. Seconded by Chair Summerson.

Chair Simmerson nominated Robert Mehorter. Seconded by Chair Tyson.

Total Votes: Oyedele: 24 Mehorter: 22 Barbosa: 22 Rathbun: 19
Reyes: 19 Abstentions: 0

Nominations and Elections for College of Nursing Representative (1)

Nominations and Elections for University College Representative (1)

Senator Montoya nominated Jacob Milner. Seconded by Speaker Bove.

Total Votes: Milner: 22 Moherter: 2

G. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

- Student Organization Committee

Chair Gibson reported that members of her committee will soon begin attending meetings of various student organizations to ensure that they are following senate rules, and urged senators who are not members of SOC

to also participate. She stated that any senator who attends a meeting will be able to substitute that meeting for office hours. She also talked about the work of her committee and urged the new senators-elected to join SOC. Senator Collins asked if the committee meets in person or virtually.

Chair Gibson replied that the committee meets on Tuesdays at 5:30pm in a hybrid format.

- Academic Affairs Committee

Chair Summerson welcomed the new senators-elect. She stated that her committee also meets on Tuesdays at 5:30pm and spoke about the work that her committee does. She also reminded senators that the last day to drop a class is tonight, and that registration for j-term courses will begin on October 31st.

Speaker Bove reminded everyone to RSVP for the pumpkin carving with President Parlange by Friday.

- External Affairs Committee

Chair Scotti reported that the Narragansett neighborhood cleanup will be held on November 20th.

- Cultural Affairs Committee

Chair Tyson urged the new senators-elect to join the Cultural Affairs Committee and spoke about the committee's recent work. She also reported that the committee will be collecting nonperishable foods, coats, winter clothes, toiletries, toothpaste, and toothbrushes for a donation drive to benefit refugees. She stressed to the new senators-elect the importance of being active in the Senate and making the most of their positions.

- Campus Affairs Committee

Chair Chadronet reported that he will be working on getting the Blue Lights identified as unoperation fixed. He urged the new senator-elect to join his committee, and said he is continuing to work with HRL on the shower door issue as well as the vending machine resolution the Senate recently passed.

- Executive Committee

President Kiernan joined over the phone and reported that she is going to be looking for senators to help work the polls in Narragansett. She reminded senators to RSVP for the upcoming pumpkin carving, and reminded everyone to take care of themselves.

Director Hoover reported that he has still not heard from many clubs if they plan to attend his finance training.

He said that any club that does not attend will have their budgets frozen. He reported that he will be offering one more training on November 3rd at 5:00pm.

Director Njeru urged the senators-elect to attend his bill writing workshop on Monday at 4:00pm in the Senate office. He also read out the Senate Kudos.

H. REPORT OF THE COURT

I. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

K. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

L. NEW BUSINESS

SS-22/23-21 – BILL CALLING FOR THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF “Italian Club” AS A

SENATE-RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATION

Whereas, the “Italian Club” mission statement is, “To spread the Italian culture and inform the members about whatever curiosities they have about Italy”, and

Whereas, Italian Club meets the requirements to be a senate-recognized student organization, and

Whereas, it is custom for the senate to do so, now therefore be it,

Resolved, that the University of Rhode Island Student Senate acknowledges Italian Club as a recognized organization, and be it further,

Resolved, that Italian Club is provided with the first-year financial benefits package of \$75 which is to be paid out over the course of the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

SPONSOR: Student Organizations Committee
BILL HANDLER: Chairwoman Gibson
DATE: Wednesday, October 19, 2022
RECOMMENDATION: (6-0-0)
EXPIRATION: Valid Until Next Re-Recognition
ACTION: Vote Next Week
Chair Gibson motioned to immediately consider. Seconded by Senator Pekcham.
Motion Passes.
Bill Passes.

SS-22/23-22 Resolution Calling on Dining Services to Improve Multicultural Representation in Dining

Options

Whereas, in the months of September and October of 2022, the Cultural Affairs Committee conducted a survey of students feelings relating to their perceived representation, or lack thereof, in the dining options offered at the Butterfield and Mainfare Dining Halls, and

Whereas, 136 students participated in the survey, and

Whereas, of those who responded to the survey questions, 57.4% of students stated that they did not feel as though their culture was represented in the dining halls, 94.4% of students stated that they would like to see cultural holidays such as the Lunar New Year, Ramadan, Kwanzaa, Yom Kippor, etc, observed in the dining halls, and 99.3% of student stated that they wanted to see more international foods in the dining halls, now therefore be it,

Resolved, that the University of Rhode Island Student Senate requests that Dining Services improve the multicultural representation in its dining offerings, and that they observe multicultural and religious holidays in the dining halls.

SPONSOR: Cultural Affairs Committee
BILL HANDLER: Chair Tyson
DATE: October 19, 2022
RECOMMENDATION (3 - 0 - 0)
EXPIRATION: Valid Until Reviewed
ACTION: Vote Tonight

Chair Tyson explained the intent of the resolution and urged all senators to vote in favor.

Bill Passes.

M. GENERAL DISCUSSION AND OPEN FORUM

Speaker Bove recognized Chair Tyson for her outstanding work on last week's Diversity and Inclusion Town Hall.

N. ADJOURNMENT

Speaker Bove adjourned the meeting at 7:41pm.