



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 February 1, 2023

**A. CALL TO ORDER** - Speaker Bove called the meeting to order at 6:31pm.

### **B. ROLL CALL**

Present: Bailey, Barbosa, Bose, Bove, Breene, Buono, Chadronet, Cronan, DeLorenzo, Dumas, Galiano, Goswami, James, N. Johnson, V. Johnson, Mehorter, Mayers, Milner, Montoya, Newman, Palmer, Peckham, Piacentini, Reyes, Rudolph, Scotti, Stahl, Summerson, Sutton.

Absent: Collins (excused), Confessore, Rathbun.

Guests: Kiernan, Gamache, Stiles

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

Chair Summerson motioned to approve the agenda. Seconded by Senator Barbosa.

*Motion Passes.*

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

Chair Summerson motioned to approve the minutes. Seconded by Senator Mayers.

*Motion Passes.*

### **E. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The chamber welcomed Speaker Bove back from his trip to Washington D.C.

### **F. PUBLIC FORUM**

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

- Student Organization Committee

Chair Johnson reminded senators of the upcoming student organizations fair on February 9<sup>th</sup>. He also reported that the February Presidents Meeting will be held next Monday at 7:00pm on zoom, and reminded everyone that all club presidents or their designees are required to attend.

Senator Sutton asked what happens if all members of a club's executive board have a class during the presidents meeting.

Chair Johnson replied that the club president should email him at soc@rhodysenate.org.

- Academic Affairs Committee

Chair Summerson reminded all senators that the Academic Affairs Committee cannot respond to academic complaints relating to incidents which occurred in previous semesters, and asked senators to make sure their friends are aware of this. She also announced that her committee members will be attending club meetings to make senate more visible.

- External Affairs Committee

Chair Montoya reported that he has emailed the police chiefs of both Narragansett and South Kingstown, and he will be meeting with them next week. He asked everyone to let him know if you have any questions they'd like him to ask. He also reported that he has reached out to Joe Paradise and Cody Ochs about issues with Transportation and Parking. He further stated that the committee will be working on a series of informal materials (videos pamphlets, etc.) about parking and shuttles. He reported that he will be going to the Narragansett Town Council meeting on Monday, and that he is hoping to meet with as many council members as possible. He reminded everyone to tell students who are having off campus issues to email the External account. He concluded by reporting that there have been five new nuisance stickers

Speaker Bove asked if there is a way to track if houses that are being stickered are those of Greek Life members.

Chair Montoya and President Kiernan replied that it is not possible as it is an invasion of privacy.

Chair Chadronet asked if there was an update on the opening of the solar panel lot.

Chair Montoya replied that he did not know and that he would find out.

- Cultural Affairs Committee

Chair Bailey recognized today as the first day of Black History Month. She reported that a post was made in collaboration with the Senate Instagram account. She also reported that the committee will be making weekly Woke Wednesdays posts highlighting influential people of color. She reported that Emmet Till's mother is being honored first.

Senator Breene announced that there will be a celebration of a Tu B'shvat Seder held on Sunday from 11:30am to 12:30pm in the Hilel center.

- Campus Affairs Committee

Chair Chadronet announced that the committee is currently planning a small campus cleanup event. He also reported that his committee will have their first meeting tomorrow at 7:30pm on Zoom.

- Executive Committee

Speaker Bove reported that the Senate will be joined by URI Chief of Police Michael Jagoda for next week's meeting. He also reported that he will begin work on planning the 2023 Senate Formal this week. He asked committee chairs to not use the Senate office for their committee meetings, as it is a space for everyone and there are many other places to meet in the Memorial Union. He concluded by reporting that the university is looking to select a new student members of the URI Board of Trustees, and that more information will come out soon.

President Kiernan – Asked members to reach out to her if they are interested in participating in RhodyThon. She reported that she is looking for a junior to appoint to the commencement committee. She echoed Chair Montoya’s statements about nuisance stickers, and reminded everyone of the importance of being safe and respectful when hosting parties. She concluded by saying that committees who are meeting in the office are ok in her opinion if it is during hours where the office is mostly empty, but committees meeting earlier in the day should move to a new location.

Vice-President Gamache thanked everyone who attended the State of the University Address. She also reminded everyone that she needs more people to sign up for the Student Organizations Fair being held on February 9.

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

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

#### **J. SPECIAL ORDERS**

*Nominations and Elections for Off Campus Representative (6)*

*Nominations and Elections for On Campus Representative (1)*

*Nominations and Elections for At-Large Representative (5)*

Senator Milner nominated Timothy Small. Seconded by Chair Johnson.

Mr. Small introduced himself as a theatre major and a freshman perspective political science double major.

Speaker Bove spoke in favor of Mr. Small’s nomination

Results: Small: 27      Abstentions: 0

*The nominee is elected.*

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

*Nominations and Elections for College of Health Sciences Representative (1)*

## **K. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **L. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **SS-22/23-37 Bill Calling for the Fourth Amendment to the University of Rhode Island Student Senate Constitution**

Whereas, the Constitution of the University of Rhode Island Student Senate requires that students must pay the Student Activities Tax in order to serve as a member of any branch of the Student Senate, and

Whereas, because students who are enrolled part time pay a pro-rated Student Activities Tax based on the number of credits they are taking in a given semester, part time students have been deemed ineligible to serve in the Student Senate, and

Whereas, the University Registrars Office estimates that there are a total of 778 degree seeking part time undergraduate students enrolled in at least six credits for the Spring 2023 semester, and

Whereas, part time students are disproportionately Pell Grant recipients, first generation college students, students with children, etc., and

Whereas, the Student Senate recognizes that these groups are underrepresented and deserve a voice in student government, and

Whereas, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Speaker of the Assembly took on a much larger role in the functions of the Senate and the legislative process, and

Whereas, the constitution of the Student Senate currently allows for the Speaker of the Assembly to be a non member of the Assembly, and

Whereas, given the Speaker's expanded role in the legislative process, it would be beneficial to the Student Senate to ensure that the Speaker is elected from amongst the voting members of the General Assembly, and

Whereas, it is unlikely that anyone from outside of the Assembly would be elected to the Speakership in its current form, now therefore be it,

Resolved, that the following text be added to Article IV of the University of Rhode Island Student Senate Constitution, "Degree-seeking undergraduate students who are enrolled part time in at least six credits, who have paid a pro-rated Student Activities Tax, may serve as representatives from that at-large and college constituencies, or in any office of the cabinet or court provided that they meet all other eligibility requirements outlined in this document.", and be it further,

Resolved, that the text within Article V, Section D, Part 5, of the University of Rhode Island Student Senate Constitution be amended to read as follows, "The Speaker of the Assembly chairs all meetings of the Assembly. The Speaker also appoints and removes the members of the Assembly's standing committees; removals are subject to the approval of the committee's chair. The Speaker of the Assembly is nominated and elected by and from the Assembly. Any officials duly appointed by The Speaker will serve as ex-officio non-voting members of the Assembly. The Speaker shall clearly communicate the instructions of the Assembly to the Cabinet. The Speaker may speak on behalf of the Assembly.", and be it further,

Resolved, that the Elections Committee is instructed to place a referendum question on the adoption of this amendment on the ballots as part of the Spring 2023 General Elections.

SPONSORS:	Speaker Bove, Chairs Montoya and Chadronet, Senators Cronan and Barbosa.
BILL HANDLER:	Speaker Bove
DATE:	February 1, 2023
RECOMMENDATION:	(5 – 0 – 0)
EXPIRATION:	Valid Until Reviewed
ACTION	Vote in Three Weeks

Senator Johnson asked if it was possible to create a part-time constituency instead

Speaker Bove answered it was possible, but that it would remove seats from other students as senate is capped at 45 members.

President Kiernan spoke in support of the amendment

Speaker Bove explained how the speakership has changed since COVID and throughout his tenure, and expressed that he felt this legislation would bring the constitution more inline with the modern role the speaker plays in the legislative process.

President Kiernan stated that while it is unlikely the Senate will ever see an individual like Speaker Bove wielding the gavel, she felt that ensuring that the Speaker is a member of the Assembly would be beneficial for the Senate.

Chair Chadronet spoke in support of the bill.

Speaker Bove expressed his view that that paying less in Student Activities Tax being a justification for losing access to senate is ridiculous.

Chair Montoya spoke in support of the bill referencing former Senator Perrone's loss of his seat.

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

Senator James expressed her excitement for Black History Month.

Chair Bailey restated parts of her report to Senator James as she had missed the report.

Speaker Bove recognized the Cultural and Treasury committees for the budget request workshop they recently held.

Senator Peckham announced that the Student Events Advising Office is having issues with their event registration form on their website. She stated that any club looking to host an event would temporarily need to fill out a google form in order to host an event on campus. She also announced that SEA will be holding a Trivia Night on February 11, and a Bingo Night on February 25.

Chair Summerson reported that she will be sending a When2Meet to members of the elections committee soon.

Senator Stahl thanked Speaker Bove for helping her with an issue she was having with the URI payroll office.

Speaker Bove reminded committee chairs to attend his chairs meeting after adjournment.

**N. ADJOURNMENT** - Speaker Bove adjourned the meeting at 7:12pm.