**STUDENT ASSOCIATION SENATE MEETING**

**Campus Center, Assembly Hall**

**October 09, 2013, 8:30 PM**

* CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING ROLL

*Chairman Witte convened the meeting at 8:30 PM.*

* Pledge of Allegiance
* *The following Senators were present:*

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| * Sen. Finney Abraham * Sen. Haris Alic * Sen. Stephanie Augustin * Sen. Anthony Balzano * Sen. Nadia Belkin * Sen. Alexa Cappola * Sen. Devin Caravello * Sen. Corey Carmello * Sen. Patrick Cronin * Sen. Khadija Cuevas * Sen. Stanley De la Cruz * Sen. Skylar DeAngelo * Sen. Beroro Efekoro * Sen. Allie Faver * Sen. Alex Flood * Sen. Robert Forman * Sen. Michael Gray II * Sen. Roevelle Gustave * Sen. Chenaniah Henderson * Sen. Brad Hershenson * Sen. James King | * Sen. Ashley Klingberg * Sen. Matthew Krush * Sen. Stephanie Leader * Sen. Michael Longo * Sen. Daniel Markisello * Sen. Joe Messmer * Sen. Casey Olszewski * Sen. Kathleen Orlan * Sen. Zach Ripka * Sen. Johnathon Rood * Sen. Roger Rook * Sen. Brittany Russell * Sen. Vanessa Salamy * Sen. Emma Schwab * Sen. Jacob Sherretts * Sen. Michael Snyder * Sen. Mike Torres * Sen. Connor Wilkins |

**Absent with an excuse**: Sen. Benjamin Engwer, Sen. Cylas Martell-Crawford

**Absent without an excuse:** Sen. Steven Nevins, Sen. Diana Parisi, Sen. James Perry, Sen. Shireen Ramnath, Sen. Brittany Russell, Sen. Lyle Weintraub

**Also in attendance:** President Francis Agyemang, Chief of Staff Lee Stanton, Director of Student Group Affairs Katie Thomas, Director of Legislative Affairs Marc Cohen, Director of Academic Affairs Derek Ellis, Director of Community Engagement and Outreach Rose Avellino, Deputy Comptroller Tyler Paladino, Director of Programming Ajon Crump, Director of Marketing Steven Valentine, University of Albany President Robert Jones, and Director of Athletics Lee Mcelroy.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

-Motion to skip reading of last week’s minutes by Sen. Efekoro, Second by Sen. Cronin. *Motion passes*

-Motion to approve minutes with unanimous consent by Sen. Leader, Second by Sen. Krush *Motion passes.*

PUBLIC COMMENT:

-Sen. DeAngelo:

* Presents himself as the president of the group Young Americans for Liberty. Group has been featured on a local television series and mentioned during a Twitter storm today.
* Group will be hosting a Second Amendment Rally on Tuesday, October 15th at 10am on Collins Circle.
* Asks senators to follow Young Americans for Liberty on Facebook.

-Sen. De La Cruz: President of local council, group will be hosting a Mayor’s debate on Monday October 21st in the Albany public library. Invites senators to attend.

-Sen. King: Invites senators to Sketchy Character’s free comedy shows, hosted every Saturday at 6:30pm, located in the (former) Wendy’s lounge.

-Alex Geber: Invites senators to participate in a charity group that gives away extra meal trades to charity. Meetings will take place Next Wednesday and Thursday from 7pm-8pm. For more information, contact him at swipewithapurpose@gmail.com.

-Sen. Sherretts: President of Phi Sigma Alpha, will be holding an meeting in CC 375 regarding a new mayor forum. Will email all senators a Facebook invitation.

OPENING REMARKS:

-Chairman Witte: Reminds senators to sign up on the SA’s Facebook page, some senators still have not.

-Vice Chair Krush:

* Requests that committee chairs and/or ranking committee members email weekly meeting attendance records.
* Hopes all senators reached out to constituents regarding their thoughts on the stadium vote as it will be deliberated on tonight.

UNIVERSITY REPORT:

-UAlbany President Dr. Robert Jones:

* Pleasure to meet with SA, honored to be invited. Commends senators for being deeply engaged in the workings of the University.
* Thanks all senators and leadership team who participated in the week long celebration leading up to his inauguration. Celebrating the excellence of this institution and his vision to continue developing it into a viable competitive University.
* President’s 2020 mission for the university:
* To increase the availability of degree programs in order to enhance the undergraduate experience.
* Improve the recruitment strategy to make the university a top choice in the country for in state, out of state and international students.
* Seeking to hire 200 new faculty members over the next 5 years in hopes of expanding degree programs.
* Expanding research agenda and money we bring in to support these next level of innovations that stimulate the state’s economy.
* Interested in increasing endowments to create scholarship support for students. He and his spouse have recently made a commitment of their own resources, donating $1.5 million to the University.
* Promote a collective impact, need student support to help advance critical agenda.
* Advocates for voting in favor of the stadium vote, thanks senators beforehand for their generosity.

*Steps Down*

-Chairman Witte: Announces there will be an open forum on November 4th to ask the President any further questions.

Director of Athletics Lee Mcelroy:

* Reminds senators the importance of investing in the future of the University. Thanks senators for considering the Appropriation regarding donating to the stadium.

JUDICIAL REPORT:

Chief Justice John Bogil:

* Although eight justices have been nominated for seven available spots, it is no longer an issue. The extra justice is needed; a justice who has been serving since last year has expressed the desire to step down.

BOARD OF FINANCE REPORT:

Sen. Michael Longo:

* New appointment for Comptroller, Lee Stanton, will be deliberated tonight.

EXECUTIVE REPORT:

-President Francis Agyemang:

* Announces that on October 19th, Kaplan will be hosting free practice GRE, LSAT and MCAT practice tests.
* Tomorrow will be meeting with University administrators to discuss fountain day.

-Director of Student Group Affairs Katie Thomas:

* Couple of new groups have been established. Including one called UNano that seeks to involve more students from the Nanoscience College on our campus.
* Currently 284 active student groups.

-Director of Academic Affairs Derek Ellis:

* Met with the Dean of Undergraduate Studies last week to discuss better accommodating any student that may have issues regarding a teacher, class or grade.
* Finalizing details for freshman and transfer orientations.

-Director of Community Engagement and Outreach Rose Avellino:

* There will be a Community Service fair on October 16th in the LCs from 10am-2pm.

-Assistant to the Director of Gender and Sexuality:

* On Friday there will be an LGBTQ event at the small fountain from 1-3pm.
* There will be a coming out session on October 24 at 7pm in honor of National Coming Out day with a transgender spoken poet as a guest.
* November 20th will be transgender day in remembrance for those who have passed.

-Director of Marketing Steven Valentine:

* Block party was a success.
* IPad raffle winner from the Speaker Series event has been chosen.
* Seeking to promote “Colonial Quad Terror” where middle school children can trick or treat in Livingston Tower.
* Creating flyers to promote the open forum with President Jones.
* Working alongside the Director of Community Engagement and Outreach Rose Avellino to spread the word about the Pine Hills clean up.
* Involved in promoting Kaplan’s free practice test event on campus.
* Assistants are flyering to remind the student body of the homecoming game and pregame celebration Saturday, October 19th.

-Director of Legislative Affairs Marc Cohen:

* Introduces his assistant, Adam Henn, to recognize his initiatives and hard work in front of the Senate.
* Preparing for the President open forum, has topics to discuss taking into consideration those mentioned in last week’s meeting.
* Will be emailing the President post-forum a list of issues requiring simple yes/no answers, encourages senators who have any suggestions they would like to include in this list to contact him via email.

-Director of Programming Ajon Crump:

* Intends on sending a representative in place to maintain an open flow of information in hopes of avoiding the communication problems that have occurred in the past.
* Introduces Amy Ortiz, a student who has helped out with both programming events.
* Introduces Kadira, a new freshman working alongside her.

-Chief Of Staff Lee Stanton: Reminds senators that all officers are holding officers house and encourages all to come.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

-Chair of Committee of Rules Sen. Messmer:

* Committee’s permanent meeting time- Monday’s at 2pm, excluding this upcoming Monday due to holiday.
* Senators have until October 21st to change a by-law.
* Announces that the Rules committee has the ability to review attendance records and remove any senator from office who breaks the attendance policy: missing 3-4 senate meetings or committee meetings without notice. Sen. Lyle Weintraub is currently the only one who has broken the rule.
* Will continue to bring up more names in the future.

-Ranking Member of the Appropriations Committee Roger Rook:

Committee met last night at 7pm:

* Met with Red Cross, reassures senators that committee is working diligently to ensure only authorized costs are funded by SA.
* Went over bill for stadium donation that will be presented tonight on the legislative agenda.
* A bill that was tabled last week regarding budget allocation to the Albany Outdoor club will be considered tonight.

-Chair of the Community Engagement and Outreach Committee Mike Torres:

* Committee met on Sunday at 6pm. Meetings will be bi-weekly unless otherwise necessary.
* There will be a Breast Cancer Walk on October 20th in Washington Park.
* Encourages senators to volunteer their time on October 30th from 5pm-7pm for a Halloween program at a local hospital that will be hosting a Halloween event for terminal kids.

- Chair of Government Operations Committee Sen. Wilkins: Committee met last Thursday no exact meeting time yet.

- Chair of Constituent Relations Sen. Cronin:

* Committee met last night, still scheduling future meetings.
* In the process of putting together a sample memo in regards to the Student Group Attendance Act, looking for senator input.

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA:

-Motion to move **Bill 1314-043** to the top of the docket by Sen. Longo, Second by Sen. Snyder. Motion passes

**Bill 1314-043: (Comptroller Appointment- Lee Stanton)**

-Sen. Longo: There were three outstanding candidates for the position of Comptroller, ultimately decided on Lee Stanton based on the qualities he could bring to the position.

-Chief of Staff Lee Stanton:

• Expresses interest in improving the quality of campus life for students.

• Plans on working alongside former comptroller, Vice Chair Krush, to ensure effectiveness.

• Although education background does not include finance or economics, section 5033.1 states that the comptroller serves as the chief financial officer, not as an accountant. Intends to actively facilitate any sort of conflicts.

• Does not plan to ignore financial aspects of position, has reputable exposure to this aspect of the position, (sat on the Board of Finance last year, acted as a financial coordinator of a campaign this summer)

• Brings different aspects to the table than a traditional comptroller.

• Opens for questions

-Vice Chair Krush: Points out that there is some language missing from when he was appointed comptroller-procedural formality.

Motion to amend language by Sen. Krush, Second by Sen. Leader, motion stands.

Motion to vote by UC by Sen. Gray, objection by Sen. Schwab.

-Sen. Schwab: In regards to the importance of the comptroller position, strongly suggests debating the bill.

Motion to debate by Sen. Schwab, Second by Sen. Snyder

*Debate Forum*

-Sen. Cronin: Advocates for Lee Stanton as the position of Comptroller, believes he is the best choice for bridging the gap between the student body and student government.

-Sen. Schwab: Allocates time to Deputy Comptroller

-Deputy Comptroller Tyler Paladino:

• Strongly recommends that if any nay say exists on this appointment to be brought forth now, given that the only person who can impeach the comptroller is the Board of Finance.

Motion by Sen. Olszewski to move to question forum, Second by Sen. Deangelo

*Question forum*

Motion to vote via hand count by Sen. Cronin, Second by Sen. Deangelo. Objection by Sen. Olszewski.

-Sen. Olszewski: Who were the other applicants for this position?

-Sen. Longo: Kenneth Strosa, Tyler Paladino, and Lee Stanton.

Motion to vote via hand count by Sen. Cronin, Second by Sen. Leader.

**In favor**: 32 **Opposed**: 0 **Abstentions:** 7

*Bill passes.*

Newly appointed Comptroller Lee Stanton: Appreciates confirmation, respectfully resigns as the Chief of Staff.

**Bill 1314-039: (Appropriations-UAlbany Outdoor Club)**

-Sen. Rook: Presents representative from the Outdoor Club

-UAlbany Outdoor Club Member:

• The majority of the club's events will be off campus.

• Free to join.

• Most trips will be funded on their own, SA funding will go towards camping gear.

-Chairman Witte: Questions, motions?

Motion to vote by UC by Sen. Efekoro, Second by Sen. King, no objections

*Bill passes.*

**Bill 1314-041: (Appropriations-UAlbany Red Cross)**

-Sen. Rook:

• Committee met yesterday to break down what funding will be used for. Deducted from proposal what SA was unable to fund.

-Treasurer of UAlbany Red Cross:

• Group consists of community service events mostly off campus.

• Must supplement for budget due to an issue with last year's treasurer.

• Last year there were 28 active members, this year there are over 100. Asking for substantial amount in order to fund certification training ($20 per member).

• Group intends on holding numerous fundraising events throughout the year.

-Chairman: Questions, motions to vote?

-Motion to vote by Sen. Cronin, Second by Sen. Schwab.

(Due to requested funds exceeding $1000, must vote via roll call)

**In favor**: 36 **Opposed**: 0 **Abstentions**: 1

*Bill passes.*

**Bill 1314-042: (Appropriations- Stadium Donation)**

-Sen. Rook**:**

* Announces that the final donation amount represents $1 per student enrolled at the University (12,878).
* The donation establishes a great relationship between students and the Dept. of Athletics.

-Chairman Witte: (As a sponsor of bill, steps down from podium)

* Presents PowerPoint with background history, statistical information and the symbolic significance of the stadium.
* Advocates for student government to invest in athletic life.

**-**Dept. of AthleticsRepresentative Lee Mcelroy: Expresses the importance of investing in the university as a way to invest in the future.

-Sen. Rook:

* Point of information- announces that there is $20,000 left over from last year’s Appropriations budget, viable funds for donation.

-Chairman Witte:

* Before moving to questions, would like to point out that there will never be another opportunity to make a donation to commemorate Bob Ford.
* Would like to present the check to Mr. Ford during homecoming to thank him for his service to the University.

*Questions forum*

-Sen. Alic: Where exactly will the donation go?

-Chairman Witte:

* The money will go to the Alumni foundation where it will then be forwarded to the Dept. of Athletics.
* There will be a plaque recognizing SA for the donation.
* Will be using the stadium for SA events as well.

-Sen. Caravello: How many people have been attending games at the new stadium?

-Chairman Witte: There were 7,200 attendees at the second game. The next scheduled game is homecoming.

-Sen. Schwab: Will the stadium be used for more than just football?

-Dept. of Athletics, Lee Mcelroy: The stadium will be used for regional lacrosse, high school sport events, women’s soccer league and concerts.

-Sen. Alic: How much money still needs to be raised to pay off the stadium?

-Dept. of Athletics, Lee Mcelroy: Money was borrowed privately (bonded). Still have $3 million to raise to close gaps.

-Sen. Caravello: Will the SA be asked to donate more than once?

-Chairman Witte: No, this represents a once in a lifetime opportunity to honor Bob Ford.

-Sen. Messmer: Proposes an amendment, hopes it is not found controversial:

Requests that any plaque created to honor a donation from the SA does not specify any student, but only mentions SA as a whole.

-Chairman finds it friendly.

-Sen. Markisello: Where is the money for the donation coming from?

-Chairman Witte: Money will be retrieved from the Appropriations budget, money typically set aside for student groups. Able to afford this donation due to leftover funds from last year.

-Sen. Markisello: Will this donation increase the likelihood that student groups will be turned down due to lack of funding?

-Chairman Witte: No. The student activity was increased and there is currently a surplus due to the money left over from last year.

Motion to move to debate by Sen. Gray, Second by Sen. Deangelo

*Debate Forum*

-Sen. Gray:

* Advocates for investing in the stadium.
* Announces he currently sits on the Board of Directors, is willing to break down costs to others if there is any concern.

-Sen. Messmer: Point of Order- asks that Sen. Gray not contribute to the rest of the discussion regarding the stadium vote due to his affiliation with the Board and abstain from voting. Represents a conflict of interest.

-Director of Programming Ajon Crump: Advocates for stadium donation, as Programming director, would like to potentially hold events/concerts there.

-Chairman Witte: Announces that opening weekend brought $800 thousand in sales in UAlbany gear, stadium represents a way to profit from school pride.

-Sen. De La Cruz: As a student athlete, appreciates SA’s investment in athletics.

-Sen. Olszewski:

* Since the closing of the fountain, there is no centralized place for students to meet. The games at the stadium have brought students together again.
* There is room for this donation in the budget, will not substantially hurt the SA’s pocket.

-Sen. Deangelo:

* In strong opposition to the legislation.
* Does not intend to diminish the work of Bob Ford or his mission, but feels that this donation is outside the scope of SA.
* The donation represents almost 20% of the Appropriation’s budget and will not contribute significantly to close the gap of what is owed (the Athletics Department will still need to raise over $6 million to pay off bonds).
* The scope of the SA is to primarily fund student group activities. Money is coming from a fund most closely associated with students, this donation represents taking from students in a way that will not directly benefit them.
* Although the Board of Finance did a good job last year in terms of retaining a surplus in the budget, that does not indicate that the same will hold true this year (there is a new finance chair this year).
* Students are already investing in this school by paying tuition. Money should be raised on its own.

-Sen. Markisello:

* The money is meant for students as written in the by-laws.
* The donation is $13 thousand more than spent on any Appropriations last year.
* The stadium would not have been built if the money could not be raised elsewhere.

-Sen. Ripka:

* If the stadium is dependent on funds from the Student Association, then it should not have been built in the first place.
* The money has other important uses, not for an expensive gesture for a field that is already there that was built without being reliant on SA’s donation.

-Sen. Markisello: Will intramural groups be able to use the stadium?

-Dept. of Athletics Lee Mcelroy: Yes.

-Sen. Faver: Allocates time to Director of Student Group Affairs, Katie Thomas.

-Director Thomas: Students have already come to her expressing interest in using the stadium for group events, this investment does benefit students.

-Sen. Orlan: This gesture will create a better relationship w the Athletics department which benefits students.

-Sen. Wilkins**:** A $12,000 gesture to improve relations with the Athletic department seems unnecessary. The only real benefit will be the plaque with SA’s name on it.

-Sen. Ashley Klingberg: Allocates time to Director of Legislative Affairs Mark Cohen.

-Director of Legislative Affairs Mark Cohen: Although some senator’s feel donating $12,000 will not make an impact, it will encourage others to donate as well.

-Sen. Snyder: Allocates time to Sen. Deangelo

-Sen. Deangelo:

* Although the donation has been framed as “$1 per student” it is not counted that way in the budget.
* As representatives, senators should weigh how students feel about this. Believes this decision should not be made without attempting to reach out to constituents first.

-Sen. Leader: Did speak to constituents, found that about 9/10 of those she spoke to regarding the stadium donation were in favor.

-Sen. Olszewski: The allocation has a symbolic significance. It would look bad on the part of SA to turn down the request the one time the Athletics dept. asked for help.

-Sen. Cappola:

* Disagrees with those senators who believe the donation will not make a difference. The SA donation received attention from President Jones, will get the attention of others

-Sen. Torres:

* Argues that this stadium benefits multiple sources, finds it a misconception to believe only football players will benefit from the donation.
* Numerous community events will attract prospective students. The stadium helps to garner interest in our school.
* As Chair of the Community Outreach committee, finds it important to reach out to others. As an RA on Alumni quad, attests that several transfers have mentioned they are pleased with how the stadium looks.

-Sen. Gustave: Allocates time to Director of Programming Ajon Crump

-Director Crump:

* Reminds senators that student groups are not the only one who pay fees. Athletes are also students of this university and pay their share of fees. These student athletes wear UAlbany gear the most and travel to other places representing our University. The student government would be wrong to neglect them.
* The Speaker series can be broken down to cost $10 per student, but that does not indicate that all students attend. The same applies to the stadium donation. The donation is a symbol meant to represent each member of the student body, whether they will attend games or not.

-Sen. Henderson: The donation shows that we are standing behind the new changes in our university. If we deny the Dept. of Athletics, they may deny student government requests.

-Sen. Caravello:

* There are obvious benefits to having the stadium on our university. The real issue at hand is whether SA should use their funds to help pay for it, to which he does not concur that student group funds should be used.
* If SA sets this precedent of giving large donations, it will negatively affect student groups in the long term.

-Sen. Messmer: Will be voting no. Believes donation close to $13,000 is taking too much from student groups. The donation was originally $1,000 and no one has explained why it increased. SA can show support for the stadium without the large donation cost.

Motion to cap the speaking list by Sen. Snyder. No objections.

*List is capped. Only selected senators who ask to be on the list are allowed to make final debate points.*

*At this point, senators reiterate previous points on supporting an investment in school pride or opposition to the large cost away from student group funds.*

*Debate forum closes.*

*Questions forum*

-Sen. Messmer: Would like to inquire on why the donation cost increased.

-Chairman Witte: There are different levels of donations. Those who donate in the first tier, $1000, receive just a small engravement. Donating over $10,000 qualifies as a second tier donation, qualifying for bigger recognition, including a plaque recognizing the Student Association, displaying our name on the board during the game, and grants the SA more leeway on where the plaque is to be placed.

-Sen. Markisello: Would the Chairman find it friendly to amend the bill to retrieve donation funds from Reserves instead of from the Appropriations fund?

-Chairman Witte: Does not make a real difference, finds it friendly.

Motion to vote on the bill by Sen. Forman, second by Sen. Leader

-Vice Chair Krush: Announces that the bill requires a 2/3 majority to pass.

*Vote via roll call*

**In favor:** 23 **Opposed**: 11 **Abstentions**: 4

Represents a 2/3 majority in favor of the Stadium donation.

*Bill passes.*

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

CLOSING REMARKS

CLOSING ROLL and Adjournment

*Senators adjourned.*