

February 22, 2012

Student Government Association Senate meeting minutes: 02/22/2012

Student Government Association, Northeastern University

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Senate Minutes

Student Government Association
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Quorum: *was met.*

The **Chair** called the meeting to order at **7:02 pm.**

The minutes *are approved* without objection.

Executive Vice President, Will **Pett** *yields.*

Northeastern University's **President Joseph E. Aoun** spoke before the Senate.

10

President, Michael **Sabo**:

- Pint with the President was yesterday. It went really well. I'm in the process of assessing student feedback.
- The Cabinet tonight will be reviewing submitted referenda.
- We will be submitting SGA's annual budget request later this evening.

Comptroller, Anthony **Golia** *yields.*

Vice President for Academic Affairs, Josh **Coombes**:

20

- TRACE subcommittee met yesterday.
- I have a lot of meetings with the bookstore, library, and Vice Provost **Ronkin**, so if you have any interest in those areas please let me know.

Vice President for Student Affairs, Jonas **Edwards-Jenks**:

- I want to thank Senators **Petrin, Harris, and Shaw**, for volunteering for the food drive last Friday outside of Outtakes. We are going to try and make this a reoccurring thing, so if you have any interest in helping out please let me know.
- I joined Director **Daly** and Senator **Connelly** and other NUStarts people in a meeting with the transfer students about their experience.

30

Vice President for Student Involvement, Matthew **Crimmins**:

- We have approved the Marine Biology Club, Biomedical Engineering Club, Global UNICEF chapter, and constitution revisions to the Pre Law Society, and a name change from Students for Israel Northeastern to Huskies for Israel.
- We had the Presidents' Meeting last week.
- There are concerns about transitions within student organizations, and it is something SIB will be working on.
- Tomorrow at 7pm in 300 Richards is an event called Tricks of the Trade: How to Promote your Event on Campus. Please spread the word on this as it is really important for student organizations.

40

Vice President for Student Services, Tim **LePage**:

- At last week's basketball and hockey games, athletics handed out Recyclemania shirts.
- I want to thank everyone who came out to Mardi Gras last night.

Chief of Staff, Terry **MacCormack**:

- We will be presenting the budget proposal tonight.
- I know we had technical difficulties with the recognition poll, so I'm going to extend the deadline until Monday before Senate.

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- Thanks for continually doing office hours this semester.
- 50 Executive Director of Communications, Kelly **Dwyer** *yields*.
- Parliamentarian, Ryan **Gordon** *yields*.
- Elections Chair, Taylor **Cotter**:
- Elections Committee is meeting at 8:30 after Senate.
- The **Senate** moved into Question Time.
- 60 The **Senate** moved into New Business.
- President **Sabo** and Chief of Staff **MacCormack** present the Association's Budget Request.
- VP **Edwards-Jenks** *moves* to extend the presentation by 5 minutes.
With no objection, the motion passes.
- The Senate moves into questions on the Budget Request.
- Senator **Naraghi** asks for the history on stipends and their purpose?
- 70
 - Several years ago there was a major restructuring. There were 5 eboard positions. Stipends were always higher because there were fewer positions to fund. Last year the President was requested for \$7000 and the other positions for \$5000, so we are requesting what was allocated by the appeals board.
- Senator **Corrado** asks about the decrease in funding in outreach and giveaways?
- We examined each line item, and it was based upon budget tracking. We aren't spending as much as we were given, and want the next budget to reflect that. It was independent of stipends.
- Senator **Mitchell** asks about SGA apparel. Was that accounted in the budget?
- We have a separate cash account, which is fundraised. Apparel would be supplemented out of that fund. It is independent of this request.
- 80 Senator **Splain** asks why did you choose 75% of funding for Chief of Staff and Executive Director rather than 100%?
- We thought 75% was the logical next step for these positions after the projection of the last year's allocation.
- Senator **Quijada** asks what amounts were allocated before the appeal of stipends?
- \$3000 for VPs, \$4,000 for President, \$3,500 for EVP.
- Senator **Petrin** asks when the fiscal year starts?
- Starts July 1st 2012, ends June 30, 2013.
- Comptroller **Golia** asks why you feel the chief of staff and executive director should get more stipend when the appeals board ruled they should receive less SAF payment due to them not being elected?
- 90
 - We added an amendment that instituted hour requirements on those positions. Now we are working to get those levels up to equal amounts.
- Senator **Cotter** asks that considering a large proportion of advertising goes to elections, if you considered breaking it out into its own line item?
- No we did not.
- Senator **Naraghi** *moves* to extend Question Time by ten minutes.
Senator **Splain** *seconds* the motion.

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With no objection, the motion passes.

Senator **Harris** asks if other student organizations receive stipends?

- 100
- RSA is the only other student organization.

Senator **Quijada** asks who hears the appeal of a budget request?

- Any party would appeal to the President. I would be appealing to myself. The Appeals Board is made up of myself, the Comptroller, and a Student Affairs designee.

Senator **Petrin** asks how Newsletter and IdeaScale are the same line item?

- At one point we had to pay for the newsletter, now we don't. It's just used for IdeaScale.

Senator **Naraghi** asks why executive board members are paid stipends?

- One of the main reasons why we are paid stipends is for compensation for the work we have to do to represent the student body. A real example is when I have to travel to BILC in Tufts and Emerson for networking, and I need to pay for the trip there. Also, cost of living.

- 110
- Senator **Splain** asks given the overall reduced budget, do you foresee an increased contribution from the cash account?

- I don't expect any change, however I can't speak for next year's executive board.

Comptroller **Golia** asks how much the President and Treasurer said this year's eboard would contribute towards stipends, which was then voted on and approved by the Senate?

- As I said before, the Senate approved last year \$7,000 for the President, \$5,000 for the other 8 positions. The assumption is total, not broken down from the cash account. \$6300 was supplemented from the cash account this year.

Senator **Quijada** asks them to speak to the reason the President makes more than others?

- The reason I just mentioned. As the student body president, I speak for the body in a broad way.

- 120
- Going to these events with other student governments, you incur costs that others might not incur.

Senator **Petrin** asks if the RSA stipends are funded out of the Student Activity Fee?

- No, it is funded out of the Resident Activity Fee.

Senator **Naraghi** asks why Senators don't get stipends?

- Though there is not a direct correlation between hours worked and payment, it does offset costs incurred, and hour requirement.

Senator **Madan** asks if you have an estimate of how much is in the cash account?

- It is currently a little over \$11,500.

The Senate moves into Debate on the Budget Request.

- 130
- Senator **Splain** says his overall feel of this is good. I like that we are cutting money and I like the questions around the payroll. As chief of staff last year, the historic reason SGA received one is due to the hours put in to this. Not only doing this with other students but working with administration, it did used to be a scholarship, and SGA should encourage university to do something like that.

Comptroller **Golia** says stipends are not meant to be payment for hours worked. The SAF Manual expressly prohibits that. It allows it to offset the costs incurred of holding the job. I don't think it's fair that any position makes more than any other out of the SAF. If SGA wants to use their own money to pay the president more, than that's on them. They shouldn't put the responsibility on the student body to pay SGA's president more.

- 140
- President **Sabo** says that in the sense of the position, the President has more costs incurred by virtue of the fact that they are the student body president. They are responsible for the Association and the Student Body. The President needs to make more than the other positions for a lot of reasons.

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VP **Edwards-Jenks** said a lot of thought and time has gone into this. I keep focusing on the bottom line. We are increasing the SAF, and we are decreasing our overall budget. I think it is a very responsible budget.

150 Senator **Quijada** says that as a Finance Board Member, we consider the value of a request to the entire student body. SGA does great things on this campus, however I don't see a reason the SAF should be funding more money for one individual and the cash account would not be able to do that.

Senator **Cotter** says that as a former eboard member, I can speak for most current and former members in saying that the stipends are negligible and cover minimum costs.

Senator **Rynowecer** *yields* to Student at Large **D'Angelo**. She says eboard positions used to have full tuition. This is a huge decrease from that.

160 Senator **Mitchell** says he agrees with others who say that in a time where the federal government is challenged with fiscal responsibility, it seems SGA has found a way to be fiscally responsible. Also, I don't have a problem with different eboard members having different amounts. If you equate this to the real federal government, the President has a lot more responsibility than his Vice President, so he should have a larger stipend. If you think at a macro level, it makes more sense.

Senator **Naraghi** says first and foremost what you're doing for SGA as eboard members should be covered. If you're advocating you shouldn't have to pay out of pocket. On the other hand, when students at your school are complaining they don't want stipends that is something you need to consider as well.

170 Senator **Quijada** says that, speaking to a previous point about tuition being covered, that was not covered out of the SAF, and I've never heard a student outside of this room say that they understand why eboard members receive stipends.

Comptroller **Golia** says, in reference to a previous speaker, that he doesn't believe that there are any restrictions in the Federal Government that say President Obama can only receive payment for costs incurred. However, there are such restrictions on the SAF. The SAF says that it can only go to cover costs incurred. I am all for the President making more than the other positions. I am not fine with the Student Activity Fee being used to make the president make more. Let it come out of the cash account.

180 Senator **Splain** reminds everyone that though this was presented by President **Sabo** and Chief of Staff **MacCormack**, it does not represent them; instead it represents those running in future years.

Senator **Petrin** says that an important point to remember is that it isn't money, it says what we value and it has public relations implications. I think that when you see payrolls and stipends it does create a public relations issue and it sends the message that we do value our work more than theirs.

VP **Edwards-Jenks** says that having the executive board have a stipend paid for by the students puts on you a whole level of accountability that wouldn't be present without a stipend. That speaks volumes more to the work that we do. The stipend is not what draws me to this position; it is what allows me to do it.

190 The **Senate** moved into Open Discussion.

Senator **Corrado** said there are two hockey games this weekend, and we are hoping to have as many volunteers as possible for the second intermission to collect recyclables and promote Recyclemania.

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Chief of Staff **MacCormack** thanks everyone for their thoughtful debate tonight on the budget.

Senator **Naraghi** says this a conversation we should be having with the entire student body, so talk to everyone about what they think about how their SAF is spent.

- 200 The executive board tonight will be going over the referenda questions that were submitted. The ones that they approve will be on the SGA website tonight or tomorrow. Get your constituents talking.

Comptroller **Golia** says he hopes the executive board makes the budget request available to all who hope to take it and show it to their constituents, and also promote it themselves for feedback about how the SAF is spent.

Senator **Petrin** thanks Chief of Staff **MacCormack** and President **Sabo** for their work in putting together the budget.

- 210 President **Sabo** says the current Massachusetts speaker of the house is having a meet and greet this Tuesday in Boston. If you're interested, let me know and I'll put you in touch with the right people.

Without objection, the **Chair** closed the meeting at **8:34 pm**.