



ASSOCIATED STUDENTS BELL MEMORIAL UNION COMMITTEE

This meeting was facilitated both in-person and via an online Zoom format, consistent with the Governor's Executive Order N29-20, suspending certain open meeting law restrictions.

Tuesday, October 19, 2021

2 p.m.

BMU 205

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kiley Kirkpatrick, Art Cox, Anthony Ruiz, Annabel Grimm, Sofia Askari, Ange Bledsoe, Dominic Patrone

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mujtaba Azam (unexcused), Victorina Jeffers

OTHERS PRESENT: Jamie Clyde, Karen Bang (recording), Curtis Sicheneder, Shar Krater, Eliza Miller, Hugh Hammond, Susan Jennings, Katrina Robertson, Thang Ho, Jon Slaughter, Katie Peterson, Grace Hoxha, Duncan Young, Nani Teves

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – The Chair, Kirkpatrick, called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.
- II. **MECHOOPDA LAND RECOGNITION** – The meeting was started with the reading of the Mechoopda Land Recognition statement.
- III. **AGENDA –Motion to approve the 10/19/21 regular meeting agenda (Ruiz/Grimm) 6-0-0 MSC.**
- IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Minutes of the regular meeting of 10/5/21. **Motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of 10/5/21 as presented (Ruiz/Grimm) 6-0-0 MSC.**
- V. **ANNOUNCEMENTS** – None
- VI. **BUSINESS**
 - A. Action Item: Approval to increase previously approved budget of \$1,080,400 for the BMU Wellness Center project, for a total revised cost of \$2,000,000 – Clyde explained that \$2,000,000 was listed as a placeholder; they now have a PEWAF with final numbers, and the total revised cost has been reduced to \$1,750,000. **Move to improve increasing the previously approved budget of \$1,080,400 for the BMU Wellness Center project, for a total revised cost of \$1,750,000 (Ruiz/Grimm).** Clyde said \$250,000 that was originally for that project for furniture was on the capital side of the budget and the increase has furniture in it, so actual increase is approximately \$350,000 plus a buffer. She explained that the PEWAF is for \$1,388,200 and she is asking for approval in the amount of \$1,750,000 in case something happens causing increased unforeseen costs. She explained what a PEWAF is and noted that the buffer is being requested so they will hopefully not have to come back to BMUC for additional funds in the middle of the construction. Cox asked if the \$1,080,400 budgeted amount was from before COVID and Sicheneder said that was their estimate at that time. Grimm said she looked into this due to the increase and noted two factors driving the increased cost. She said the first is cost of materials and bottlenecked deliveries. Secondly, labor was initially quoted with local labor because the contractor believed he could get local subcontractors but none are available. They now anticipate having to bring in contractors from other areas. She said the hope is that they will be able to use local vendors, which would decrease the price. Clyde said we have the reserves now and costs are more likely to stay the same or go up. Sicheneder said the Wellness Center was a need prior to the pandemic and that need is even greater now. Clyde said Grimm helped to work with FMS to reduce costs by a few hundred thousand dollars. Sicheneder said it should be a three month build once construction is started. Grimm said she was assured that if we're able to get approval they can issue a notice to proceed immediately. Discussion was held. Clyde said she'd like to see the students utilize their dollars in this way and that it would be nice to give back to the

current student population. Kirkpatrick thanked them for their work on this project, noting this will really help students in the years to come. **6-0-0 MSC.**

- B. Information Item – Bell Memorial Union Mission and Program Statements – Slaughter said one of his missions this semester is to review and reaffirm the mission and program statements for the various areas of the AS by December. He reviewed the current statements and noted that the BMU Statement was last done in 1992 and doesn't address the WREC because it didn't exist at that time. He explained what a mission statement should state and asked if they'd like to appoint a committee to work on this item, or engage the entire committee at the table. Kirkpatrick will email committee members regarding participation in this project.
- C. Discussion Item – 7/31/21 and 8/31/21 Combined Student Union and WREC/AO Summary Income and Expense Statement – Sicheneder reviewed with the committee, noting a benchmark of 16.7%. The Student Union has expensed 9.69% of the approved annual budget and generated 1.91% of projected income. He noted that the biggest driver of income is student union fees and these fees haven't hit the budget yet. Sicheneder explained that the number one driver of expenses is wages and because we're never fully staffed, are not paying the fully budgeted amount of labor.
- D. Discussion Item: Possibility of adding solar to the University Farm – Kirkpatrick said AS President Duncan Young brought this idea to her to see how this might fit in with the AS and possibly as a SFAC project. Young said this idea stems from his summer working as a Climate Action Fellow with AmeriCorps, and also worked with Cheri Chastain, Director of Sustainability on campus. He explained that the University currently generates long term contracts with various third parties for solar energy to go on campus buildings. He said his understanding is that the University is a governmental agency so doesn't have the same access to tax credits that a private or non-profit entity would, and wondered if perhaps the AS could provide this service. He was advised by Teves that there is money for a large project available through the Sustainability Fund Allocation Committee (SFAC). He said after further discussions and pulling together numbers, what the University would need out of an initial contract is outside the realm of possibilities at the moment. Young said he then thought about how a project like this could be scaled down so that in the future when the University goes to renew contracts, the AS would have some level of expertise and could bid for them. Young said he's thinking about some ways of possible alternatives for placing solar and noted we can't use the BMU or WREC roofs as they are already contracted out for solar. Young said his understanding is that the University Farm has the ability to produce more energy on site than it can consume, and perhaps the AS could lease a plot of land from the University Farm and develop it into a small solar array. He said this would help the campus to move closer to their goal of being completely carbon neutral by 2030. He requested that BMUC discuss this project, figure out if it's financially viable, as well contractually viable with the University, and if would be something BMUC would be interested in doing. Sicheneder questioned if there was any talk of infrastructure costs. Young said PG&E has some restrictions related to plots that you can't overproduce more than your property is capable of consuming but the University Farm has an exemption to that. He said Chastain told him the cost would initially be \$12 million to put solar on four buildings as they'd want to do it in a bundle. He said he estimated that an initial array could perhaps start at \$1 million to \$2 million, and noted there are energy grants as well as debt service loans to non-profits at low or no interest, along with the tax benefits. Kirkpatrick said this could be looked into and discussed more as a group to see if it's feasible.

- VII. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT** – Clyde said there has been criticism regarding the open hours for the BMU and WREC that we moved to for the semester, noting they are both closed on weekends. She said pre-pandemic, both buildings were open 7 days a week. Clyde said they've made a conscious effort to move towards something that would be sustainable moving through the semester with 60% to 65% of students attending in-person classes. She said Sicheneder looked at when the WREC was most utilized and found high density time was Monday through Friday. Clyde said the strategy was to compress working staff that we have, noting that the AS normally has approximately 100 professional staff, and that's now down to 80 – they are short staffed in various areas throughout the AS. Clyde said that traditionally the AS hires approximately 700 students. The AS was down to approximately 30 student employees this summer, and is currently at 400 students, with Dining being the most understaffed. Clyde said the main reason for closing weekends is due to staffing of career staff, especially custodians, as a lot of cleaning needs to be done. She said even if we had a full staff it still pushes the envelope and forces us to compress down the operations we have. Regarding student staff, Clyde explained that they build up skills throughout the year and unfortunately there have been very few returners. She said they are needed to help open, close and manage the building. Clyde said our commitment was to start with what we could handle, and adjust every 30 days to see if we can take on more.

She said until critical staffing levels are up, they can't safely increase hours. Clyde said she has talked with other ASs that run unions, and we're right in the middle. Those that opened up 7 days a week are now pulling back because they're losing staff. Clyde said from a realistic viewpoint, she doesn't think we'll be able to open up 7 days a week until spring and that might be too optimistic. She said they have received many emails requesting opening on weekends. Kirkpatrick said she has heard from many students regarding the WREC being closed on weekends, or Dining having different hours. Clyde said the vaccine mandate has also caused the AS to lose students that weren't compliant, and students that have started with us, fear being around so many people, so they leave. Clyde said this isn't unique to just us; it's happening everywhere. Sicheneder said quarantining of staff has also been an issue although that is beginning to slowly subside. Clyde said if positions can be filled faster, they'll reevaluate, noting her priority is to open buildings ASAP without overtaxing staff.

- VIII. INTERIM ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT** – Sicheneder said the bike auction was held last Wednesday. He said that Adventure Outings (AO) runs the bike cart, and get bikes left as property through UPD. They refurbish the bikes and sell them at auction for the AO Get Outdoors Fund. Typically, there are up to 50 bikes for sale that sell for an average price of \$90 each. This time they sold 21 bikes, for up to \$110 each.
- IX. VP APPOINTEE'S REPORT** – Patrone said he had no report from ASBC.
- X. CHAIR'S REPORT** – Kirkpatrick said she was seeing on social media that people are a little frustrated over the basketball closure within the WREC. Sicheneder said they've closed it two or three times as compliance is an issue regarding students needing to wear masks and for the time being, it will remain closed. Kirkpatrick said students aren't understanding why it is closed, and suggested brainstorming on how to get the message across to the students, perhaps via Instagram. Sicheneder said he would speak with Anna Paladini in Marketing regarding this. He did note that the basketball courts are being utilized for other activities with good compliance. Kirkpatrick reminded that SFAC is coming up within the next month and requested everyone to spread the word about it.
- XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS** – Teves said for those students on SFAC, the training is Tuesday, October 26 at 2:30 p.m. in BMU 209. She said SFAC applications are due on November 3 and she'll forward them to SFAC members that day. Clyde said this is Grimm's last BMUC meeting which is very, very sad. She thanked Grimm, noting she has been a massive supporter for the student Wellness Center as well as being instrumental on many other AS projects. Grimm said it has been her pleasure to work with everyone and hopefully will be able to partner in a different way. Kirkpatrick thanked her for all she has done on BMUC.
- XII. PUBLIC OPINION** – Limited to three minutes per speaker, five minutes for entire topic – None
- XIII. ADJOURNMENT** – The Chair, Kirkpatrick, adjourned the meeting at 3 p.m.