



Cornell University
University Assembly

Minutes
University Assembly
Tuesday, November 4, 2014
4:30 – 6:00 p.m.
401 Physical Sciences Bldg.

I. Call to Order

J. Blair called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

Attendance:

Present: R. Adessa, S. Balik, J. Barnett, J. Batista, M. Battaglia, C. Best, J. Blair, T. Bollu, R. Booker, M. Hatch, E. Johnston, N. La Celle, G. Mezey, R. Walroth, R. Wayne

Absent: J. Burns, E. Loew, C. McGrath

Others Present: D. Skorton, G. Giambattista

There were no late additions to the agenda.

II. Approval of Minutes

After two minor changes, the minutes of the October 7, 2014 meeting were approved unanimously.

III. Reports from Assemblies

Student Assembly

S. Balik reported work on a mental health awareness conference coming in two weeks. The SA will also hold an open forum in the coming weeks that will be a town hall style meeting.

Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

R. Walroth reported the GPSA discussed civility and free speech at their meeting two weeks ago. Their discussions centered on advance notice issues. There was opposition to any formal requirement for notice but also an understanding of the difference between peaceful and violent protest. He also reported that the GPSA has appointed people to all UA committees. Lastly, the Diversity and International Students committee will be holding a dine and discuss event.

Employee Assembly

G. Mezey reported that the final President's Address to Staff took place on October 28. He also noted the EA recognized him with the Employee Appreciation Award for his continued support of the employee community. He also noted the EA is working with D. Roth and the Campus Sustainability Office on the green office initiative.

Faculty Senate

There was no report.

IV. Committee Updates

Executive Committee

M. Battaglia said the Executive Committee met two weeks ago and reported that Dr. Corson-Rikert would join the UA at its next meeting. CUPD Chief K. Zoner will also be in attendance. S. Murphy may also come. Topics of discussion will include the CSVP and related work. Separately, he announced the 5th annual sustainability summit. UA members are encouraged to attend.

J. Blair added that President Skorton has identified the membership of the working group for consideration of use of outside space procedures and noted that he would be the chair of this group.

M. Hatch asked why the discussions of this working group were not going through the CJC instead. J. Blair responded saying that last year's CJC efforts demonstrated that the issues were too broad to be handled by a committee as narrow as the CJC. The formation of the working group was recommended by the UA last year.

Campus Infrastructure Committee

N. La Celle reported the CIC discussed President Skorton's letter regarding the agreement reached with TCAT. The committee also discussed becoming more involved in housing.

Campus Welfare Committee

C. Best reported the CWC discussed reengagement with Gannett as well as the childcare center and the Towards New Destinations campaign. She noted the committee heard a presentation on the results of a survey on satisfaction with the childcare center. Results were very positive. She proposed placing this short presentation on the agenda of a future UA meeting.

VI. Business of the Day

The meeting agenda was suspended for a discussion with President David Skorton and Vice President for University Relations Joel Malina.

President Skorton began by noting that the coming year will be a transitional one. The President, Provost, and Vice President for Student and Academic Services will all change. He hoped the assembly members and the community at large would become acquainted with President-elect Garrett.

J. Blair introduced the first of the questions identified by assembly members. There was concern about the source of funding for the additional money promised to TCAT. D. Skorton said the money would currently come from Ithaca's central budget. It represents a large portion of the current budget margin.

The next question was related to campus sustainability. J. Blair noted the widespread desire for the acceleration of campus carbon neutrality from 2050 to 2035. He noted that discussions with the Campus Sustainability Office revealed at least six major items that required attention before this acceleration would be deemed feasible.

D. Skorton affirmed 2035 as the official carbon neutrality goal. He noted a need for input regarding any top-down strategies employed to reach this goal. However, there exist other strategies such as changing the focus of the faculty that ought not to be administered in a top-down fashion at all. Both J. Blair and D. Skorton stressed the need for wider discussion of what individuals need to do to help reach university carbon neutrality.

M. Hatch asked if the importance of the carbon neutrality issue warrants interference with other projects like new facilities and changes in the direction of some university business like fundraising. D. Skorton said faculty, staff, and students would have to be supportive of a change in the direction of fundraising efforts if one were to be successful. He also noted a need to identify what sustainability project deserves the next major investment.

J. Blair asked if there were any items with which D. Skorton needed the assembly's assistance.

D. Skorton identified the consummation of pending actions from previously accepted resolutions as a major goal. In addition, engineering the smoothest transition possible will be important. New administrators need to be included in and welcomed to the shared governance process. Finally, he noted there are some things that he cannot conclusively handle before his departure. Examples include dealing with sexual violence and student financial aid. Both of these issues require constant work to ensure continuous improvement.

G. Mezey asked how the colleges could be better involved in shared governance. D. Skorton responded saying each major unit would optimally have its own local shared governance. There are issues with this, however, and people could be brought to the UA instead.

D. Skorton left the meeting.

IV. Committee Updates

The assembly returned where the earlier committee updates left off.

Codes and Judicial Committee

R. Wayne reported the CJC spoke about the free speech issues and considered the language President Skorton and J. Mingle had submitted. The committee rejected the language. J. Mackowski offered an interpretation of the code as a document of principles and policies. The proposed line did not fit. No resolution has been reached, but the committee is currently circulating and discussing alternate language. G. Mezey invited anyone interested to attend CJC meetings. This will allow the conversation at the assembly level to be more appropriate and productive.

R. Walroth noted that all the committee meetings are at the same time. He asked if other meetings could be rescheduled so that other members can attend CJC meetings. J. Blair approved of this.

V. Liaison Update

Council on Sexual Violence Prevention

R. Adessa reported that she and S. Balik attended the CSVP meeting on October 9. There was an update on education and other initiatives meant to build cultural respect. Information on how to effectively act in a preventative rather than reactive manner was also presented.

Policy Advisory Group

There was no report.

VII. New Business

UA Resolution 2 – Welcome and Invitation to incoming President Elizabeth Garrett

The resolution was introduced and some small errors were corrected.

The resolution was approved by a vote of 14-0-1.

VIII. Adjournment

J. Blair adjourned the meeting at 5:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Noah Wegener
Assemblies Clerk